LEOLIN ABBEY.

VOL. II.

LEOLIN ABBEY.

A Novel.

BY ALICIA LEFANU,

AUTHOR OF

STRATHALLAN AND HELEN MONTEAGLE.

Soffri che in traccia almeno
Di mia perduta pace
Venga il pensier seguace
Su l'orme del tuo piè.
A me saran tormento
Cento memorie e cento
E tu, chi sa se mai
Ti sovverrai di me.

METASTASIO.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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LEOLIN ABBEY.

CHAPTER I.

Never can noon's maturer ray
That charm of orient light display
Which morning suns impart.
So can no later passion prove
That glow which gilds the dawn of love,
The day spring of the heart.
HON. W. R. SPENCER.

"Is he a gentleman?"—"Can he be a gentleman?"—"He is not a gentleman"—"He certainly must be a gentleman:"—these were the contradictory observations and replies that passed, with the rapidity of lightning, between Baron Angelbreight, his lady, Alured Vere, and Captain Wentworth, as they took their accustomed ramble by the sea-shore.

The subject of these quickly interchanged remarks was a figure not easily to be forgotten in any scene.

He was a young man, habited in the plain jacket and white trowsers of a common sailor; his dress was no otherwise distinguished from that class than by the exquisite neatness it displayed; while the black silk handkerchief, which, in contrast to the precision of the military stock, was carelessly tied round his neck with the sailor's affected negligence, completed his characteristic costume. But the marked and elegant features, the striking figure and noble air of the stranger, were circumstances only rendered more conspicuous by a dress that would have been most disadvantageous to one whom nature had less highly favoured. His soft, yet spirited hazel eye, sparkling with English expression united to foreign brilliancy, gave added interest to a countenance the most manly and

distinguished. With decidedly the air of a seaman, it appeared as if

"Late th' equator suns his cheek had tanned."

But no one who, for the first time, beheld this elegant sailor, could wish for the addition of bloom to features already so pleasing.

"You will never persuade me that man is not a gentleman, Angelbreight," said Lucinda, as she twitched her husband's arm to take another turn, in order to have a passing look at the handsome stranger — "Oh no doubt a hero of romance in disguise," replied "the only man she *could* love," with a sneer that showed what he had gained in English he had lost in tender and devoted admiration of his wife's accomplishments. "Do, pray, my dearest Count, enquire me out who that divinity of a sailor is, and I promise to dance the first waltz with you this evening."—"That is as *I* please," murmured Baron Angelbreight. Observing that even this bribe did not produce

any correspondent eagerness on the part of her cavalier, Lucinda indignantly resumed, "You seem to think it a degradation to enquire after this noble stranger. I tell you, Count Alured Chiaramonte, that man will make the simple costume of a sailor so fashionable, that neither military foppery, nor Sicilian magnificence, will stand any chance of being looked at beside it."

The handsome sailor having now joined a female group, one of whom he addressed by the title of "your ladyship," his gentility was put out of all question: but the restless Lucinda was tormented more than ever with the desire of knowing his reasons for assuming this strange and novel costume. In vain: the ladies, escorted by the gallant stranger, immediately turned from the sea-shore, and, almost directly afterwards, Wentworth and Chiaramonte, under pretence of an engagement at Mrs. Fitzalbert's, took leave, without any offer of service.

Whether the Baroness took this excuse as a personal slight or not, certain it is she parted with her uncourteous knights (in novel phrase) "with a calm dignity all her own:" not so easily, however, was her ardent curiosity satisfied. It never allowed her a moment's rest, till she had learned at the evening assembly the following particulars: viz. that the interesting sailor who had so much attracted her attention, was Raymond Mandeville, a very young Post Captain. That he was, now, unemployed, and, by the death of an elder brother, had, recently, stepped into the possession of a very ample fortune. That the sea, and every amusement connected with it, formed, still, his ruling passion; and that, being possessed of a magnificent yacht, he had devoted his leisure time to visiting Sicily and the adjacent islands, in which excursions, he, and some other young men of fashion of his acquaintance, had adopted the same

dress as that his sailors wore; perhaps from whim, but more probably for convenience.

The little Baroness was impatient to communicate her morning's rencontre to Miss Fitzalbert. Had she been as observant as curious, she might have perceived a momentary, but marked change in the countenance of her auditor. But Ellen, with her usual dignified self-possession, recovered her composure in an instant, and Lucinda was much too full of the subject of "dear divine Captain Mandeville," to give attention to any circumstance that did not appear to her connected with it.

The following day was fixed for the visit to Mount Ætna; Mr. Fitzalbert was very anxious to have it so, although he could do little more, when he arrived there, than drive Mrs. Fitzalbert in a low chair round the foot of the mountain; talk of Pindar and the Campi Phlegræi of Sir William Hamilton; inform his

companion that Ætna was the Mongibello of the Italian poets ; and anticipate the pleasure he should have, when he returned to England, in relating the wondrous achievements that he had—*not* performed.

The rest of the party consisted of Miss Fitzalbert, Alured, Captain Wentworth, Baron Angelbreight, and Lucinda. Eager to explore a scene at once so curious to the traveller, so renowned in history and song, the activity of Alured and his friend had soon outstript that of their female companions. Captain Angelbreight remained with them, and Lucinda persisted in ascending to the summit, while Ellen felt ashamed to lag behind. The Baroness was determined not to give up ; she placed her pride in this performance, and declared she would not leave the mountain without carrying away some specimens of lava as proofs of her perseverance.

While thus they wound " with toil-

some march their long array," the Baron, more phlegmatic than Alured, was only considering how he should persuade his fair companions to return before they attempted more perilous heights; when Lucinda, having gratified her curiosity, prepared to descend, leaving to Alured and Captain Wentworth the dangerous honour of climbing to the top of the mountain.

She had not proceeded far on her return, when she exclaimed, with an affected shriek, "Oh Heavens, my basket of lava! do Angelbreight, there's a good creature, look for my basket of lava; I laid it down somewhere when you were making me look at the prospect; I would not lose my basket of lava for millions."

The Baron left her in search of the precious specimens.

"What a good creature it is," resumed the Baroness, turning, with an air of triumph, to Ellen; "I have but

to wish, and he flies to execute my orders."

But perceiving that Angelbreight delayed his return, Lucinda began to be uneasy, and at length would have turned back towards the mountain in search of him, had not Ellen, who was unequal to farther exertion, forcibly detained her.

" Stop, for mercy's sake stop," said Miss Fitzalbert, in a hollow, tremulous voice; " do not, do not leave me,"

Lucinda turned to Ellen; the paleness of death was on her countenance; the Baroness thought she had done too much, but another cause for her companion's agitation quickly presented itself. Advancing towards them, she distinguished Captain Mandeville, "the elegant sailor;" and the convulsive grasp of Ellen grew stronger, and her entreaties to her friend more earnest. All the commiseration of the lively Baroness was immediately changed to raillery.

" I must go, indeed, my dear," she

said, and was hastening away. "Oh stay, preserve me," Ellen faintly resumed.

"Preserve you from what, my dear?"

"From the sight of the man I most detest and dread," Ellen, averting her face, and in a slow, inward tone, replied.

"Upon my word you are singular in your sentiments, and *I* detest unreasonable antipathies; so, finding I shall leave you with a *Cavallero* you are acquainted with, I must no longer delay going in search of my truant."

Away she tripped, and the dreaded Captain Mandeville approached. Ellen wished to fly, but was scarcely able to support herself. Had the thoughtless Lucinda waited till Mandeville drew near, she would have recovered the object of her search; for the graceful stranger held in his hand the identical basket of lava which had caused the party so much trouble. Imagining it to have been lost by Miss Fitzalbert,

he approached with the respectful familiarity of an old acquaintance, and, as he returned it, addressed her some words of pleasure at seeing her again; but the forbidding coldness of her manner made him sensible how much he had erred.

Again Ellen tried to walk, and refusing his assistance, appeared evidently desirous to shorten the conference, but Raymond would not leave her. At length he said, " I see that since we last met, some cause has deprived me of your good opinion: if any such exist, I could easily explain."

" I require no explanation, Captain Mandeville," Ellen, in a more resolute tone, replied.

Still he resolved that she should hear him. He led her to a fragment of rock, and almost forced her to be seated; while his regret for the time that had intervened since he had last been with her and Mrs. Fitzalbert was expressed in terms of such true and ingenuous

sorrow, that, spite of her prepossessions, Ellen felt some of her anger subside; but quickly recollecting what was due to herself, "I can hear no more of this, Captain Mandeville," she abruptly said. "The husband of Signora Rosalia can have nothing to regret in the loss of my friendship."

A ray of light beamed at once upon Raymond. "Signora Rosalia! Surely you have been led into this error by the marriage of my brother!" He paused, and Ellen, scarcely able to give credence to intelligence that so much delighted her, but slowly suffered herself to be convinced that the marriage which she had seen announced in the papers as having taken place in Sicily, between "Rosalia di Montranzo and Captain Mandeville, son of Clement Mandeville, Esquire, of Alnewood Park," related to Mandeville's elder brother, a captain in the Guards.

"He met her at Syracuse," resumed Mandeville.

"Then you yourself were not in Sicily," said Ellen: "yet, joining this information to your abrupt departure, your silence after you quitted us at Naples —"

"And did you think, Miss Fitzalbert, that I willingly left Naples? Oh! but too long had I lingered in those syren seas! I received an intimation to that purpose from a quarter I durst not disobey. I had enemies, watchful and active to discover an error: the delay of another day might have proved my ruin. You were, at the moment, absent on a country excursion, and I was obliged to weigh anchor without even thanking Mr. Fitzalbert for the thousand kindnesses which —"

"Had I known of that indispensable obligation," interrupted Ellen, with a kind of half smile, "I might, perhaps, have been your advocate. My parents esteemed you highly: the service you

did them in rescuing their only child from a barbarian pirate—"

"Oh, do not speak of an action that was involuntary, impulsive!" resumed Mandeville, impetuously: "the only moment in my life on which I look back with unmixed pleasure. Hurried into action immediately after I left Naples, my life was a mingled scene of hardship and danger, till summoned to attend the death-bed of an affectionate brother. Poor Frederick! he was not destined to be long happy with his Rosalia.—I had not, meantime, neglected making what enquiries were in my power; and learnt that you had quitted Italy, but knew not where to address you in England. On being more free, I renewed my enquiries—heard that you again had left England; that Mrs. Fitzalbert was advised to try the climate of Sicily. My resolution was instantly taken; Sicily became my polar star: Sicily, the favoured spot

which contains the only beings with whom I have enjoyed the sweets of reciprocal confidence and friendship. 'Twas but yesterday I arrived at Catanea. Till now you have eluded my search; but we have met, and you will, I am sure, aid me in expressing to Mrs. Fitzalbert the delight that this meeting has given me."

What a revolution did this interview produce in the feelings of Ellen! At once she feels resentment subdued; and, at the voice of soft remembrance,

———" Discord melts away
In harmony, and the pure passions prove
How sweet the words of truth breathed from the lips of love."

In this first moment of heartfelt and rapturous delight, every intrusive recollection that could have disturbed her joy was sedulously banished. In delicious silence the reconciled pair contemplated, with new eyes, the scene in the midst of which they stood. Black

lava contrasted with the snowy summit of the mountain; clouds of sulphur were borne upon the breeze; the suffocating smoke ascended from a thousand apertures: while beneath, the hollow-sounding crash, like distant cannon, seemed formed to inspire terror in the firmest mind. Barrenness and desolation frowned around them, but Paradise was within their hearts.

At this moment the rest of the party, gay and laughing, approached the spot where Raymond and Ellen stood; and the Baroness Lucinda, disengaging herself from her new-found treasure, whispered, " Well, my dear, another time won't you take " the ghost's word for a thousand pound?" * I was sure he would conciliate you; so, *allons donc, sans ceremonie*, introduce me to your incomparable sailor."

Ellen was in too happy a flow of spirits

* Shakspeare.

to refuse even a less reasonable request; and Captain Mandeville's presentation to Mr. and Mrs. Fitzalbert concluded, greatly to her satisfaction, the adventures of the day.

CHAP. II.

T'intendo amor — mi vai
La sua fè rammentando, e non gl'inganni.
Quanto facile e mai
Nelle felicità scordar gli affanni.
METASTASIO — *Semiramide*.

SOON after this, the party at Catanea broke up; but it was only to renew their intercourse with added pleasure at Palermo. The Fitzalberts were the first who removed thither. Duty, about the same time, called Vere and Wentworth there, while Captain Mandeville, whose only business now was pleasure, found the greatest attraction at that courtly city, where the report of his fortune obtained for him a ready reception among the highest circles of the fair, and where his person and manners were universally admired.

Sydney Albemarle introduced his friend Alured to his brother John Wentworth, who was stationed at Palermo. The military and naval officers seemed mutually delighted at this rencontre. Through his brother's interest, John was soon admitted to the select circle of Mrs. Fitzalbert; and this could hardly be done, without introducing, at the same time, another naval officer, who appeared to be Wentworth's inseparable. Mr. Merriton and Mr. Wentworth, lieutenants of the St. George, and the Zephyr, were as much united in mind as they were dissimilar in person.

Mr. Merriton was a perfect epitome of a *Dandy* seaman: he made it his glory never, by the most remote hint, to indulge in an allusion to his profession; and appeared, when on shore, to have no other desire than to forget he was a naval officer. John Wentworth, on the contrary, taking into consideration that his air of florid health, and the clumsy pro-

portions of his figure, rendered it next to impossible for him to cultivate with success the lighter graces, affected entirely the rough sailor, and took refuge in an excessive bluntness and boisterous mirth, that was at least as much assumed as the delicacy of Mr. Merriton. His voice, his air, his gait, all announced the seaman : his walk resembled that of a person treading the unsteady rolling deck ; and when he flung himself into a chair, it was with a swing of the arms, as if he had just relinquished the more habitual support that ropes afforded. Vanity, unconsciously, influenced both : for affectation is a masquerader ; and if but permitted to assume a striking character, is often indifferent whether it be that of the bear or the monkey. The faults of affected people are, commonly speaking, no more their own than their virtues ; but are assumed, as occasion may call them forth, for the different purposes of contrast, intimidation, or

surprise. Thus, a lady will sometimes display a degree of caprice and petulance of manner far from natural, to set off to greater advantage her returning serenity and smiles; and a gentleman assume a frivolity and fastidiousness to which his real disposition is a stranger, that the *effect* may be the more striking when it is remembered that this die-away Adonis has signalized his courage and fortitude in more than one campaign.

It happened one night at Mrs. Fitz-albert's, that the conversation turned upon the entertainments recently given by the English; entertainments in which the Navy and Army had vied in testimonies of respect to the court of Palermo, and where the Queen, laying aside part of the imposing splendour of royalty, had condescended to be present, and to express herself highly delighted with British hospitality and politeness.

"Why, Jack," the captain, addressing his brother rather superciliously, began,

'there have been fine affairs in our absence, I understand: well, and how did the navy bucks manage the sort of thing? —for my part, I am quite at a loss to guess."

"As well as the military blades, I trust," the sailor, rather fiercely, replied.

"We had breakfasts, balls, and picnics," added Mr. Merriton, "at which were assembled all the loveliness and elegance of Palermo."

"And how upon earth did you do for room?"

"Oh, the Contessa di Vincenza lent us the whole suite of apartments at her Villa Marina for one of our entertainments," resumed John Wentworth:— "we began with English country-dances, but the Italian girls could make nothing of them,—we had scarcely fifteen couple to haul away with; but after that we had waltzes and Sicilian dances, and we piped all hands to them—old and young, ugly and pretty, Italian and English."

" A fair Palermitana is more *au fait* in those," lisped Mr. Merriton.

" Oh, then you mustered pretty strong, I dare say!" the Captain observed.

" The crowd was immense," resumed Mr. Merriton: " the heat insufferable, notwithstanding my contrivance of a fountain perpetually playing among myrtles and tuberoses; it was an overcoming labour to dance; and even to look on I found insupportably fatiguing."

" Why, so you seemed to think," observed Jack; " for you sheered off at three A. M. which, I must say, was not quite so handsome of you, as we were two of the stewards, and you should have staid to do duty in your turn, watch and watch."

" 'Twas surely his own loss," the gallant Captain returned.

" Why yes: there was a perfect tulip-bed of pretty women!" said Mr. Merriton.

" I hailed above sixty first-rates with-

out the help of glasses," added John Wentworth, looking rather contemptuously at Merriton; "devilish swift sailers; but as for some of the old painted frigates —"

"Sixty!" interrupted the officer: "it must have taken you some time to reconnoitre the company!"

"So it did," replied Jack; "but I made a cruise of observation through all the receiving-rooms for that purpose. The worst of it is, at an Italian entertainment you can't keep out a sort of privateers that hang out false colours, appearing in the dress of gentlemen, while, in fact, they are only sharpers, and on the look-out to board any rich prize that may appear within gun-shot."

"That is, indeed, a drawback upon your society," observed Captain Mandeville.

"True; but I was just thinking, Mandeville, that, on board that pretty plaything of yours, that yacht the Phœ-

nix, you could give a little breakfast, or cold collation, or something of a more select kind, that might —"

"Oh! not a water-party, my very dear Wentworth, as you value my existence!" exclaimed Lieutenant Merriton, affectedly: "the associations of pitch and tar are so indissolubly incorporated with such scenes, that all the flowers, scents, and essences of Palermo would be scarcely sufficient to create one solitary rose-coloured idea."

"A truce!" said Ellen, laughing. "Suppose you consulted the ladies upon the subject, Mr. Merriton; perhaps *we* might not have such a horror of a party on the water; — what say you, Captain Mandeville?"

It was quite unnecessary that Captain Mandeville should *say* any thing to prove that he was enraptured at Ellen's interference.

The whole of the company present were quickly engaged, and part of the

arrangements fixed on, with that gaiety and ease which mark resolutions of travellers whose chief object is pleasure.

About this time Captain Angelbreight was ordered upon duty at Palermo; a circumstance that Lucinda declared was the luckiest could have possibly happened, as she should have died of despair had she heard of an entertainment given by Captain Mandeville, at which she had not been present. Captain Mandeville's intentions were soon whispered about the city; and, as it was understood that the Queen, with the most distinguished ladies of her court, had graciously accepted an invitation, it became, of course, the ambition of all the "beauty and fashion" of Palermo to be included in the party.

At length the day arrived for which so many hearts had panted; and, arrayed in auspicious splendour, the skies seemed to smile with even more than Italian beauty.

CHAP. III.

He never shall find out fit mate, but such
As some misfortune brings him, or mistake;
Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain
Through her perverseness; but shall see her
gained
By a far worse: or, if she love, withheld
By parents; or his happiest choice *too late*
Shall meet.——

MILTON. *Paradise Lost.*

At an early hour Captain Mandeville was in readiness to receive his illustrious guests on board the Phœnix. The beauties of nature and art that adorned the bay of Palermo; a bright Italian sun shining on an ocean calm and unruffled as the summer lake, and adding fresh beauties to the splendid villas that crowned the harbour, all united to give interest to the already brilliant scene.

In a few moments appeared the

Royal barge, followed by innumerable smaller vessels, filled with spectators, and enlivened by excellent bands of music. As the Queen's barge approached the Phœnix, she was saluted with an "Evviva la Regina," performed by the band stationed on the poop, and executed with that sweetness and perfection that so peculiarly distinguishes Italian performers.

The royal stranger seemed much pleased; and as soon as the music ceased, gave a signal to her band, which none but themselves understood. Instantly the burst of wind instruments sounded in symphonious harmony our favourite national air of "Rule Britannia," and the full swelling notes of the band were succeeded by a chorus of mellifluous Italian voices singing the triumphant Ode of the British Poet, faithfully rendered in Italian verse.

Much as the royal Caroline affected popularity, the English present were

far from expecting so marked, so delicate a compliment. They almost involuntarily joined in the strain,

Alma Brettagna a reggere
Prendi il Nettunio regno;
Nè fia chi agli Angli liberi
Arrechi un giogo indegno.*

* The subjoined translation of our admired national song is by a gentleman of Corfu. In the last verse, some may think he has improved upon the original. Thomson simply says,

The Muses, still with freedom found,
Shall to thy happy coast repair.

The translator,

Le Muse allettatrici
Verran di Libertà coglier le rose
Su' tuoi poggi felici.

"The enchanting Muses shall gather the roses of liberty upon thy happy hills."

Versione libera dell' Ode Nazionale
RULE BRITANNIA,
Del Signor Spiridione Vittoria, Conte Bulgari
di Corfu.

1.

Allor che al divin cenno
Dall' azzurro Océano Albion sorgea,

Mandeville's pleasure was enhanced by distinguishing the white hand of Ellen beating time to these patriotic verses;

Questa del Nume il senno
Propizia legge di destin le fea:
Questa i Genj custodi
Carme intonaro di speranze, e lodi.
Alma Brettagna a reggere
Prendi il Nettunio regno;
Nè fia chi agli Angli liberi
Arrechi un giogo indegno.

2.

Un dì serve ai tiranni
Cadran le gente al ciel di te men care;
Ma te, scevra d'affanni,
Regina eccelsa del volubil mare
Stampar l'orme lucenti
Vedran d'invidia e di timor frementi.
Alma Brettagna, &c.

3.

Tale, augusta e tremenda
Sorgerai sempre per nimiche offese,
Qual per buffera orrenda
La Quercia, onor dell Anglico paëse
Più vigorose occulta
Le profonde radici, ed a Borea insulta.
Alma Brettagna, &c.

and it required all his presence of mind to avoid particularly attending to her,

4.

Te non potran gli alteri
Tiranni indur di servitù in periglio,
Ma quanto anzi più feri
Opreranno ad inclinarti armi, o consiglio
Fiamma più viva tanto
T'arderà di tua gloria, e del lor pianto.
Alma Brettagna, &c.

5.

Tu di Cerere il trono
Farà il sorriso delle amiche stelle;
Le città che in te sono
Splenderan tutte per commercio belle;
Fia Tuo dell' onde il piano,
E quanto abbraccia terre l'Océano.
Alma Brettagna, &c.

6.

Le Muse allettatrici
Verran di Libertà coglier le rose
Su' tuoi poggi felici;
E canteran te ricca di vezzose
Figlie, e d'arditi cori,
Onde ha l'Angla belta schermo ed onori.
Alma Brettagna a reggere
Prendi il Nettunio regno;
Nè fia chi agli Angli liberi
Arrechi un giogo indegno.

while expected to devote himself to a queen. "The unearthly voices ceased;" the liquid sounds died along the blue waves. The proper accommodation being let down, the Queen, with the greatest intrepidity and gaiety, ascended the yacht, where a superb chair of state, of crimson velvet and gold, was placed for her reception; a beautifully painted awning secured her majesty and the assembled group from any disagreeable effects of the sun. The air was filled with the perfume of roses; the railing of the deck was hung with odoriferous wreaths of natural intermixed with artificial flowers; in short nothing was omitted that could please the eye or gratify the sense.

A banquet was served up suited to the elegance and taste of the giver of the feast, and the pleasures of conversation and music so shortened the time, that evening imperceptibly stole on, when the yacht was splendidly illuminated.

The effect was brilliant as unforeseen; and taste and gallantry were united in many ingenious and appropriate devices, which, while they appeared designed to compliment the " beauteous majesty of" Naples, dexterously insinuated to Ellen that she was the *real* queen who had inspired the idea of this fête.

Understanding that the entertainment was to conclude with dancing, several ladies had had the precaution, beneath a scarf, or some light drapery suited to the morning, to arrange a tasteful and commodious evening dress. Such a variety of imagination was displayed in the selection of these, as to give the air of a fancy ball to the concluding amusements of the evening. Among the splendid and elegant groups of females, none were more admired than the Baroness Von Angelbreight in the dress of a Spanish lady, and Miss Fitzalbert in that of a peasant girl of the Isle of Ischia. This pastoral habit of green, of a most becoming and

classical form, was peculiarly calculated to set off the symmetry of her finely proportioned figure. The music sounded; the graceful sets had already begun to form: all, now, was life, spirit, and gaiety on board the Phœnix. Captain Mandeville solicited the hand of Ellen, and she yielded it to him with undissembled pleasure. When the dance was concluded, he still lingered by her, till playfully chidden for his inattention to the royal personage who honoured the scene with her presence. "Oh Ellen," Mandeville replied, in a tone at once subdued and impassioned, "do not affect to misconceive what is, to all, but too apparent: *You* are the real object of this entertainment. What an expression! You are the only object of my life, — the end of all my thoughts, my hopes, and wishes: permit me but to devote it to you: repay me for all the past, by the acceptance of my heart — my hand — my fortune."

At this sudden and unequivocal declaration, delivered with a fervour and rapidity which it was equally impossible to oppose or interrupt, Ellen experienced a mixture and contrariety of emotions that she was some moments in separating and clearing up. As soon as Miss Fitzalbert could collect her thoughts, the first impression to which she was clearly awakened, was a sense of the felicity she might, from this moment, but for her own precipitancy, have enjoyed. When Ellen had last returned to England, she was still ignorant of the union, projected by her family, between herself and George Newborough. Stung by Captain Mandeville's supposed inconstancy, she had, on Mrs. Fitzalbert's communicating her intentions, allowed herself, in one ill omened hour, to anticipate the common place gratification of revenging herself on the man she loved, by accepting him to whom she was indifferent. Had Ellen opened her heart to Mrs. Fitzal-

bert, a parent so tender would never, from any worldly motives, have sacrificed her daughter's happiness; but she acquiesced in sullen resignation, and her doom was sealed!

What is that mysterious quality in the nature and duration of time, by which memory is enabled to live over, in the course of a few seconds, thoughts, scenes, and actions, that have harrowed the mind, and engaged the attention for years? — Retrospection, here, was agony; but it was not the less distinct. "Oh too — too late!" the unhappy Ellen, with bitter self-accusation, exclaimed; and not all the tender entreaties of her anxious lover could withdraw her mind from its painful reflections, or induce her to add another word to this incoherent and alarming expression.

The attention due to the rest of the company sooned forced Captain Mandeville from her side: nothing farther material occurred till the dancing was inter-

rupted by supper. Obliged, by the duties of his situation, to attend wholly to the Queen, Mandeville could no longer, in appearance at least, be engrossed with Ellen: a Prince Felipe Gaudiano had her ear, and this Sicilian nobleman was dividing his attentions, with a kind of supercilious condescension, between Miss Fitzalbert and the Baroness Von Angelbreight. His conversation consisted chiefly of remarks on the company. "Who is that young man just opposite to us — he that is leaning on the Queen's chair?" asked Gaudiano, after looking a moment earnestly at Alured. "That," replied the Baroness in her rattling manner, "is the favourite of fortune and the fair — the divine Count Alured Vere Chiaramonte, more commonly known by the name of the "English Angel:" you have heard," she added in a whisper, "who it was gave him that name, or, at least, confirmed it"—"Chiaramonte," repeated the Prince, scarcely heeding any

other part of the reply, and eager to obtain farther information on that subject; "I thought," he resumed with affected carelessness, "Count Chiaramonte of Montalbano had been a man advanced in years, and his son" — "The old Count is dead," interrupted Lucinda, "and the last of his sons fell in an engagement some time previous to that event."—"And this gentleman has succeeded to his title. J see," observed the Prince, with one of his supercilious smiles, "great changes have taken place during my short absence from Palermo." He then lamented to the Baroness, with a confidential air, his ignorance of the characters of several persons present, owing to the fluctuating state of society at the Court, which had received several additions since a visit, of a few weeks, that he had made to one of his estates in another part of the Island. The Prince so politely testified the pleasure she would afford him by communicating any

information she possessed upon the subject, that Lucinda, quite flattered, gave a succinct sketch of the rise of Alured's fortune. Prince Felipe listened with an eager and breathless attention that seemed to defeat its own object; for he was more than once obliged to request the Baroness would repeat part of her statement over again. At the end of it, he fell into a fit of abstraction, and neither the polished graces of Ellen, nor the sprightly vivacity of Lucinda, could rouse him to any farther show of attention; on the contrary, he requested a particular introduction to Alured, and, complimenting him on his recent good fortune, congratulated himself, and the court in general, on the acquisition of so accomplished a nobleman; but these compliments were delivered in a tone of haughty condescension, peculiarly disagreeable to the high spirit of Alured. The Queen gave the signal for the company to break up. The royal party returned to land, under

a salute from all the forts upon the shore, and the assembly dispersed, all apparently gratified and delighted — all but the giver, and the object of the fête!

Under pretence of enquiring after Mrs. Fitzalbert's health, Mandeville called, as early as propriety would possibly admit, in order to learn from Ellen the meaning of the distracting expressions she had used the preceding night. The question included a most painful recapitulation; it was long before the tearful and agitated Ellen could make it.

At length he comprehended, from her broken sentences, the history of her fatal engagement to Mr. Newborough, and thought he perceived, at the same time, a ray of unexpected hope break in upon him; for it appeared evident to Mandeville, even from the short and embarrassed statement of Miss Fitzalbert, that this was a mere family arrangement, in which no hearts would be broken on either side

by breaking off the match. To induce a proud and triumphant beauty to own that any one could be indifferent to her charms, was a task not to be attempted; but the blushing Ellen was brought at length, with downcast looks, to acknowledge, that she believed no other could love with the fondness, fidelity, and fervour of Mandeville. Still another difficulty presented itself, when that arising from fears of her affection was done away. The heart of Ellen was the shrine of honour—the less religion influenced her conduct, the more she clung to its proud and dazzling substitute. To withdraw her plighted word! her promise, deliberately repeated, when Mrs. Fitzalbert offered, at Bath, to exonerate her from it—to change the moment another lover presented himself—her pride, the leading characteristic of her disposition, revolted against the idea:—How weak, how wavering, how unworthy of such a mother she must appear!—These ideas again gave

way to considerations for Mandeville's happiness; and he obtained at length from her a half reluctant promise to reveal to her mother, on the first favourable opportunity, the real state of their hearts. But this opportunity never occurred. Ellen saw Mrs. Fitzalbert gradually recovering her health from the beneficial influence of the climate,—saw her cheerfully presiding over a distinguished and literary circle, of which she herself formed the principal attraction. Could she resolve at once to interrupt this happiness, and perhaps renew her mother's sufferings, by a detail of perplexities unfortunately but wilfully incurred? When these reflections lost something of their weight, still an unconquerable timidity checked her tongue, and prevented her from improving the moments of private conference with Mrs. Fitzalbert.

Meanwhile, the water-party planned by Mandeville, was only the commencement of a series of fêtes and entertain-

ments given by the nobility on land, or by the captains of vessels stationed at Palermo. The gaiety and confidence subsisting between the English and Sicilians was, however, suddenly checked by an event that overcast the minds of strangers with gloom, and threatened to put a stop to the festivities which they had lately so much indulged in. Returning late from the public promenade of the Porta Felice, Count Alured Chiaramonte was attacked by masked and armed ruffians, who, after a desperate resistance on his part, mastered and wounded him in several places. They would certainly have dispatched him, but for the sudden appearance of Captain Mandeville and a party of friends, who were going to a late supper in the town. Their timely interference saved the life of Vere, but they found it impossible to secure the criminals. Favoured by the darkness, the assassins, whoever they were, had fled! On examination, it was found that

they had not attempted to rob him: his life alone was sought; and this gave rise to the idea that some other than a common bravo had planned the attack. However, to throw light on this mysterious affair seemed impossible, and all the enquiries that were made into it seemed only to involve it in a thicker intricacy and gloom.

CHAP. IV.

> I knew, I knew it *could* not last:
> 'Twas bright, 'twas heavenly, but 'tis past!
>
> *Lalla Rookh.*

The astonishment, the horror excited among the English at Palermo on the first rumour of this black, this cowardly attack upon one whom they justly considered as an honour to their country, may be conceived but cannot be expressed. Every attempt to trace out the assassins proved ineffectual; but a report, which began to gain credit, that they were sheltered, by royal favour, from public indignation, increased the discontents that were, now, rapidly rising between the English and Sicilians. Alured's life was, for some time, considered as in great danger, and often, while languishing on the bed of sickness, he recalled to

mind the emphatic warning of the Monk of Messina, "avoid Palermo."

With the aid of an English physician and surgeon, he was happily carried through this period of extreme suffering, and the fever that was the consequence of his wounds. The first use he made of his recovered health, was to resume a pursuit, that, for some time past, had wholly engrossed his attention.

As soon as Lord Trelawney's arrival in England was publicly notified, Alured had lost no time in addressing a letter to his lordship, containing that information respecting his own real name and character which the circumstances attending the Earl's illness and departure had prevented him from making in person. In this difficult and delicate task, he was supported by anxiety to vindicate the memory of a much-loved parent; a parent, who, it appeared, by the last confidential conversation Alured had with Lord Trelawney, stood charged with more offences than those of which she had really been guilty.

Of the expressions then dropped by his lordship, Alured earnestly entreated an explanation; offering, on his part, every satisfaction that, from his repeated conversations on the subject with his mother, he was equal to convey, relative to the earnest and anxious wish she had ever entertained for pardon and reconciliation.

Not receiving any answer to this letter, Alured, after an interval of some time, dispatched another; but neither the packet addressed to his lordship's town-house in South Audley-street, nor that directed for his elegant mansion in the country, ever received the honour of a reply. Resenting, at first, with all the vehemence of his nature, this additional slight, Alured suffered, at length, his desire of an *eclaircissement*, his rising love for Lord Trelawney, to subdue his quickly irritable feelings. But, before he wrote again, he resolved to consult Mrs. Fitzalbert, whose disposition, slightly romantic, yet tempered by a thorough

knowledge of the world, rendered her a peculiarly desirable confidante to a young man situated as he was.

Alured's reappearance among his friends was hailed with that genuine cordiality which showed how warm an interest they had taken in his misfortune; but he found it was no time to make a confidential communication to Mrs. Fitzalbert. She was in all the bustle of departure: in high consultation with Captain Mandeville, and retaining, neither in her countenance nor manners, any trace of indisposition. Mrs. Fitzalbert was, indeed, in the happiest flow of spirits; and, at those times, it was difficult to remember she was ever a sufferer from ill health.

"Give me joy, mydear friend," she said, as she cordially shook Alured by the hand, "Mr. Fitzalbert has made an arrangement that is new life to me. We have formed a party to visit the Ionian Islands — the Ionian Islands and perhaps

the coasts of Greece — * *Ce beau pays où les regrets sont, du moins, adoucis par les souvenirs.* — Nay, no apprehensive looks or grave enquiries; — call me an elderly invalide! The idea of this classic tour has given me such a buoyancy, such an elasticity of spirits, that I am determined to prove the ascendancy of mind over matter, and command you, as my Errant Knight, my Chevalier Troubadour, to maintain, both by song and prowess, against all gainsayers, that I look as young and handsome as my daughter Ellen."

This was one of Mrs. Fitzalbert's "happy days." The ascendancy of gaiety and fancy did, indeed, as she said, prove the advantage of mind over matter. The gratification she anticipated from this excursion to her elegant and highly cultivated taste, made her see nothing but advantages in it. Her wit and playful-

* Delille.

ness were truly enchanting; and Alured almost forgot, in the charms of her conversation, to ask the particulars of this sudden removal. At length, upon making some enquiry to that purpose, he learnt that Captain Mandeville, who had visited those Islands, was to take the party in his yacht, and be their Cicerone. Although at that time depending on the French government, it was not impossible for an English traveller, who avowed his motives to be only taste and curiosity, to obtain permission to visit them. Such permission had been gained, through the indefatigable assiduity of Captain Mandeville. "Our obligations to him are great," resumed Mrs. Fitzalbert, "and on Ellen's account —"

A supplicating look from Miss Fitzalbert obtained that silence which her mother's native delicacy would probably, at all events, have suggested before the conclusion of the sentence; but Alured's

curiosity was violently excited. Notwithstanding Mrs. Fitzalbert's classical enthusiasm, he could not forbear imagining that some deeper reasons than those which appeared upon the surface, caused this abrupt departure from a scene where Ellen had, for some time, shone the brightest ornament of the Court. He was soon relieved from the pain of solitary conjecture by the communicative disposition of the Baroness Lucinda, who professed to be informed of the whole affair.

"I understand," said she, "that, since the water-party, the most affecting scenes have passed at Mr. Fitzalbert's. — The old gentleman, observing the gallant sailor's increasing attentions, told him plainly it would not do; for that the fair Ellen had been for some time engaged to her cousin in England. — At this unforeseen disappointment, poor Mandeville turned all manner of colours, like a

dying * dolphin, and looked so pathetic, that it would have melted the heart of a sea-lion. — Miss Fitzalbert wept at her father's feet, and urged him till he reversed the stern decree that bound her to Mr. Newborough. — Captain Mandeville is accepted as her acknowledged lover; and, after they have made the tour of Greece, they are to return together to England, and there to be united."

This information she obligingly volunteered the first time they met after the departure of the Fitzalbert family; and such was the lady's volubility, that Alured, who had never heard of Ellen's prior engagement, had some difficulty in finding an opportunity to demand an explanation of the first part of the account.

Delighted with a hearer at once so uninformed and docile, the Baroness re-

* See Falconer's Shipwreck.

lated all she had learnt, during her residence at Bath, respecting Miss Fitz-albert's engagement to Mr. Newborough; concluding, "that she heartily rejoiced at the emancipation of the dear little creature; for that George Newborough was a stock — a stone — a *bûche* — a block; one, in short, that no woman of sentiment or delicacy *could* love; while Captain Mandeville was a dear, delightful angel, and would make Miss Fitz-albert the envy of all the ladies in Sicily!" Then, assuming an air of additional mystery, as conceiving she had a right to at least as much attention as the news-man who announces a second edition of an important gazette, she added, "There is more in this affair — more than I can venture to allude to — such great names are implicated — no less than a prince and a queen! They say the Fitzalberts made their escape in time from the court of Palermo."

Unfortunately for the correctness of

Lucinda's information, no such change had taken place in Mrs. Fitzalbert's family as the Baroness described. Divided between the care her health required, and the attentions of an ingenious literary circle who flocked to her Conversazione at Palermo, she had not observed the partiality of Captain Mandeville; and it has been already mentioned that Ellen had ever been prevented by timidity from revealing it. The offer of his services came at a most opportune moment; when, perplexed by the attentions to which Ellen was exposed from an unwelcome quarter, her whole mind was concentrated in the wish to convey her daughter in safety from Palermo. Prince Felipe Gaudiano, the nobleman who noticed Alured with such malignant scrutiny at the water-party, had been for some time a secret admirer of Miss Fitzalbert's; but, on that evening, more captivated than ever with her surpassing grace and elegance, he had declared

himself; and when his addresses were respectfully declined, on the ground of Ellen's prior engagement, instead of giving up the pursuit, called in the influence of the Queen (with whom, as well as with King Ferdinand, he was a decided favourite,) in order to induce Miss Fitzalbert to compliance.

Desirous to attach to herself so lovely and highly gifted a young creature, one whose accomplishments had excited a decided sensation even in a country where those accomplishments are carried to the highest degree of perfection,—desirous, perhaps, also of securing to a distinguished subject a fortune so considerable as that of the heiress was reported to be, the Queen entered very readily into his views. Fêtes were given, of which Ellen was the principal object—balls and races, hunting-matches and water-parties, to which last species of amusement the exiled court of Palermo evinced a decided preference. But in

the midst of the festivities and gaieties of a court, the attentions and blandishments of a queen, Miss Fitzalbert remained undazzled; for her heart was secured by a stronger tie than principle, —an attachment to another person. As continued resistance, however, threatened to render her stay at court unpleasant, she begged her mother to devise some method to abridge it, without giving up her plan of spending some time out of England. Mr. Fitzalbert, on being consulted, proposed a tour to the Ionian Islands; and the idea was no sooner started than they prepared to put it in execution. The anxiety and vexation this affair caused to Mrs. Fitzalbert, by confining her attention more immediately to one subject, contributed to prevent her observing, as she otherwise must have done, the passion of Captain Mandeville for her daughter. On the contrary, Ellen's steady resistance in the midst of all this flattering homage, her

anxious desire to be gone, appeared to her mother the most convincing proof of preference for the object of her first engagement. The previous partiality of Ellen and Mandeville at Naples was unknown to her. Ellen was just about to reveal it, when Raymond's abrupt departure, by mortifying her pride, determined her to try to conquer rather than to speak of an attachment, as she thought, so ill-placed. Her subsequent belief of his marriage fixed her resolution of persevering in silence on the subject.

She was now exposed to a danger, compared to which her former conflicts were trifling; yet so delightful did she find it, that her prudence (that prudence which had urged the necessity of flight from Prince Gaudiano) was not of power sufficient to suggest a single objection to the arrangement. As, with the assistance of her beloved Mandeville, Ellen, with a lightened heart, ascended the watery citadel, and beheld the lessening

shores of Sicily receding from their view, it seemed as if a weight of care was removed from her heart, and she forgot or wilfully shut her eyes to the unstable foundation on which rested all her hopes of happiness.

"You do not fear the water," said Raymond, tenderly, as the hour of night approached: "you were never wont to fear it during our gay excursions in the bay of Palermo."

"Ah, no," replied the beautiful enthusiast of natural religion, as she raised her eyes to the kindling firmament, disclosing its glories through the transparent medium of a clear Italian sky, "I have no apprehension under such protection.—Ere danger can approach me, I must be forgotten by God and you."

Having cleared the bay, Mandeville's sailors, many of whom were Greeks and Italians, solaced themselves, as was their custom, with an "Evviva il Capitano," in compliment to their master; and in this

wild *improviso* composition Ellen found charms, as it turned upon the virtues, the benevolence of Raymond. They then began their monotonous hymn to the Virgin, which sounded sweetly as it floated along the clear, still atmosphere. The air was so calm that they made but little way. Raymond and Ellen lingered long upon the deck to enjoy its balmy sweetness. The last weeks at Palermo she had spent in a tumult of dress and dissipation, but an evening like this she never yet had passed.

"It is an evening," said Mandeville, "to inspire the soft hymn to you beautiful planet,

Della notte serena argentea Diva —

— how seldom do we see it reigning in such powerful brilliancy in a northern clime!"

Attention to Mrs. Fitzalbert's health, at length induced her daughter to intreat she would retire from the possibly injurious effects of the night air; and Mandeville,

as he beheld his Ellen, at the call of filial tenderness, hastily break from the sweet converse which had but too many attractions for her, felt that, by such conduct, she had entwined an additional chain around his heart. Ellen, on her part, could not find herself the object of the unavoidable attention and constant care of Mandeville, without becoming daily bound to him by fresh ties, which, like Lilliputian fetters, made up in number what they wanted in strength. It might be truly said she was grateful whenever he conferred an obligation on her or her mother. Timid and agitated in the midst of happiness, and, at best, snatching "a fearful joy," her heart thanked him when his conduct justified to herself, in a degree, the acknowledgments with which that heart overflowed.

Together, they visited not only the principal Ionian islands, but also those that derive an interest from poetic fame alone. At Cephalonia, they inhaled the

eternal fragrance of the flowers, which, although growing wild, yield the materials for those exquisite liqueurs that are so highly valued in the West. They mingled in the contredanz and waltz, which every Greek peasant performs with a science and spirit that seem peculiarly to belong to the natives of that happy climate.

At Ithaca, they felt, with fresh enthusiasm, all the impressions of early youth revive, and bowed to the mighty genius of Homer, whose master-strains have attached an interest to a barren rock, beyond what is felt in the survey of wide-extended kingdoms. Often, too, did they recall, with pleased exultation, the remark, that "the most memorable transactions of history, the most important revolutions of empires, have, for their theatre, the shores of the Mediterranean."

In all these scenes, Mandeville's superior information, his knowledge of the

customs of the inhabitants, united to the classic stores of his elegant and cultivated fancy, heightened the pleasure they were so well calculated to inspire in a mind such as Ellen's; and, as their bark glided along that sea of glassy blue, which seemed another sky, and *their's* the "ship of Heaven" described by fancy's favourite poet, Love played among the shrouds, and was wafted on every gale, while their blending sighs appeared to say, "Why cannot this last for ever!"

But such is not the nature of happiness. — At Corfu Mr. Fitzalbert determined to make rather a longer stay. As the heat and *mal'aria* were much to be dreaded, he took a small but pleasant house in the suburbs, with the situation of which Mrs. Fitzalbert was delighted; but Ellen regretted the hours in which she had been the object of the exclusive care of Mandeville; hours that, she feared, would never more return. Vague ap-

prehensions began, already, to torment her. The greater had been her wilful self-delusion during the course of their too delightful voyage, the severer was the penalty she had, in consequence, incurred. While moving from place to place, each foreign scene they visited together, appeared, in the eyes of Ellen and Mandeville, to remove them to a greater distance from Newborough; and the recollection of her fatal shackles recurred at proportionably greater intervals. Still it must be owned that, even during this, the period of her liveliest enjoyment, there had always appeared in it something illusory — something that seemed to mock her ardent wish to believe all secure. And, now that the excitements of novelty and perpetually varied scenery were withdrawn, she never bade Mandeville an evening adieu, but her heart sunk within her, and her apprehensive tenderness whispered that it might possibly be the

last; that the moment was fast approaching when the fairy frostwork of her felicity would vanish and dissolve away, like the unreal splendours of a dream.

CHAP. V.

Shallow. Mistress Anne, my cousin loves you.
Slender. Aye, that I do; as well as I love any woman in Gloucestershire.
Shallow. He will maintain you like a gentlewoman.
Anne. Good master Shallow, let him woo for himself.

SHAKSPEARE.—*Merry Wives of Windsor.*

It came—the moment still more dreadful in anticipation than reality. Returning from presenting his letters of recommendation to the President of the Senate Deodati, (a circumstance that had been retarded a few days by the absence of the president,) Mr. Fitzalbert, with an air of unusual importance, announced to his wife and daughter that he had a most surprising piece of news to tell them.

"Well, I am prepared to be "very much surprised," said Mrs. Fitzalbert, good-humouredly.

"Aye; but, Miss Fitzalbert, *you* must be surprised too;—for it is a piece of news that concerns you a vast deal more than your mamma;—a vast deal more, Miss Fitzalbert."

At this intimation Ellen turned pale, while Mr. Fitzalbert proceeded:—

"Going to make my bow at the President's, who should I meet there but two countrymen of my own! The one, though a strikingly elegant young man, till now personally unknown to me: the other,—perhaps, Miss Fitzalbert, you can guess—"

By the significant look with which he pronounced these words, Ellen was sure her father alluded to some lover.

"Impossible!" she exclaimed. "It can't be Newborough!"

"You have named him," said Mr. Fitzalbert, with the shrug and smile

with which he usually accompanied the communication of good news, or news he conceived to be good.

Raymond and Ellen exchanged looks that seemed to say all was over; while, confident of giving satisfaction, Mr. Fitzalbert, with his wonted formality, continued, " He is travelling with Mr. Montresor, eldest son of Colonel Montresor, and grandson to the Earl of Trelawney. I cannot say poor George appears to advantage in his company; for Mr. Montresor is a young man, such as one does not see every day. They will, however, soon be here, by what George said to me, and then you will have an opportunity of judging for yourselves."

Adieu to Ellen's air-drawn schemes of happiness! That any motive of pleasure or curiosity should tempt Newborough to visit such distant scenes, was a circumstance which, from his phlegmatic temper, she had never allowed herself to

anticipate. And, though possessed of a proper value for her own charms, she could not, with any show of probability, attribute such conduct, in so cool a lover, to their power.

The appearance of Newborough put an end to these painful ruminations. He begged leave to present Mr. Montresor as his particular friend, and Mr. Montresor looked as if he did not think he stood in need of such a recommendation. Ellen had heard much of her cousin Constantia's romantic attachment to this gentleman, and she contemplated its object with a mixture of curiosity and interest. Ernest Montresor was an extremely handsome young man, with that high-bred air of elegance and finish, which sheds its nameless charm over every word and action. In person, he bore a striking resemblance to his beautiful sister Leonora: but there the resemblance ended. Mrs. Fitzalbert was anxious to set the apparent attention of

Newborough to Ellen in the most favourable point of view, and seized the first opportunity to express how much it gratified her.

" I really thought, when we ran away from Sicily," she said, " that our friend might lose all trace of us; but I see," continued Mrs. Fitzalbert, beaming a look of pleasure upon Newborough and Ellen, " a lover's penetration is not so easily baffled, and we did you injustice in imagining a trip to the Ionian Islands would be too great an undertaking, when the object was to anticipate the pleasures of a reunion."

" I can't say I had that exactly in view," Newborough, with some hesitation, replied; " my being at Corfu is purely accidental. My object was Athens, —to visit the temple of Minerva.—"

" Aye, you more naturally thought to find us there," interrupted Mrs. Fitzalbert, anxious to cover her nephew's ungracious-

ness; "I did mention an intention of visiting Athens, but—"

"*I* visited Athens," resumed Newborough, "thinking it a good opportunity while my friend Montresor was there,—but he was just setting off on an excursion he had been permitted to make to the Ionian Islands, having nearly finished his course of study at Athens."—

"Yes, yes, I dare say you young men make plenty of excursions, while we poor fathers are thinking you are hard at your studies," said Mr. Fitzalbert, looking, as he thought, very intelligent. "Ha! Mr. Montresor, some nymph of Naxos has gained the palm over each "maid of Athens," I suppose."

"My dear Newborough, what have you been talking of?" said Mr. Montresor, with affected perturbation; "my dear sir, I never visited Naxos in my life, nor intend to visit it." After a pause, and calling up a sentimental look, he then resumed, "that I have been distinguished

from all my countrymen, since my residence abroad, by the attentions, not only of Greeks, but of Turkish officers of the first distinction, I do not pretend to deny.—Peri Pasha—the Effendi Rezi—the learned Greek Doctor Vasilachi, and his lovely niece Sofia Nicopoli, must ever rank the highest in my esteem and gratitude."—Here Mr. Montresor paused, and gave a low, half-breathed sigh of the most exquisite coxcombry.

During the course of this visit many questions were put to Ernest Montresor, such as, "What was the manner of living at Athens?—What the nature of the studies pursued?—What society was to be had?—How was the time of the students divided?—Were there many young men from England?"—He returned but brief replies; every thing was "superlatively agreeable" there,—and it was an unrivalled climate and a "superlatively beautiful sky;" and the coffee was "superlatively fine;" and it was superlatively

delightful, in such weather, to sit still and do nothing—the manner in which he and his companions usually employed their time, to the best of his recollection.—

By living so much abroad, Mr. Montresor had acquired something of a foreign air and manner—a manner in which the Bashaw and the coxcomb, by turns, most amusingly predominated. The first, he employed towards his own sex; the second, in addressing himself to the fair. Newborough, he seemed to consider as a kind of humble companion, to be appealed to, in support of any wonderful or improbable tale: otherwise, poor George, to do him justice, scarcely ventured to open his lips.

"What a pity," said Mrs. Fitzalbert, when they were gone, "that the diffidence, the hesitating modesty of a really learned and sensible man, like Newborough, should make it impossible for him to bring forward, even in the most select society, the knowledge and information he possesses."

Miss Fitzalbert smiled.

"The modesty of Mr. Newborough is indeed truly admirable," she replied. "Did not you observe, mamma, how eagerly he disclaimed any pretensions to that lover-like solicitude you were inclined so liberally to ascribe to him?"

"Oh, Ellen," returned Mrs. Fitzalbert, with a penetrating look, "am I to find you indulgent to the faults of every one but a valued relative, a lover and friend?— True love is always timid, and great allowances ought to be made for difference of disposition: that of Newborough is diffident to a painful excess, but it is by his actions we should judge him."

Ellen saw Mrs. Fitzalbert was growing warm upon the subject, and therefore hastened, affectionately, to assure her, that, in what she said, she had not intended the slightest disrespect to Mr. Newborough, and here, for the present, the conference terminated.

Being provided with such a reinforcement of beaux, Ellen determined her promenades should include every beautiful spot in the island: — that island, famed in Homer's verse for the hospitality of Alcinous, and which boasted so many more charms for her poetical imagination under its ancient name of Scheria or the Island of the Phæacians, than its subsequent appellations of Corcyra and Corfu. Guided by her two supporters, Mr. Montresor, elegantly superficial, and Mr. Newborough, laboriously inelegant, she prepared to explore this classic ground; while Mandeville, to whom prudence loudly whispered the necessity of shunning farther danger, offered his welcome assistance to Mrs. Fitzalbert. Yet, though convinced of the propriety of avoiding Ellen himself, he could not stifle the feelings of jealousy, almost amounting to anger, against the officious Montresor. Such are the contradictions

of the human mind, that he could see Newborough engrossing the attention of Ellen almost without pain, because assured that it was a matter of right, rather than of choice, and that her heart was far from following the direction of her eyes. Not so when she bestowed any distinction on Montresor. He could not witness the slightest attention directed towards the vain and elegant stranger, without feeling his bosom assailed by a pang of bitter anguish. Was he, at length, to discover that Ellen, his adored, his faultless Ellen, was a universal coquette?— Even to her fondly partial mother, her conduct began to appear inexplicable. Ernest Montresor, while at Athens, had collected for Lord Trelawney a few mutilated marbles and unintelligible inscriptions; and, believing himself a second Comte de Caylus, was describing them to Miss Fitzalbert as "superlatively rare and valuable." He was at length stopped, by Ellen's exclamations of surprise

and delight on entering the confines of a pleasant valley, that afforded a delicious coolness, and hospitable shelter, most grateful to the whole party. The sound of the rustic pipe and pastoral song, the sight of shepherds stretched in rural indolence beneath the trees, recalled, in full reality, those poetic scenes, that, in less favoured climes, are treated as mere fairy pictures of the muse. Around these "Phæacian swains" reclined, in equal repose, their snowy flocks; while the lively rural maidens, some in the simple green dress of their country, others adorned with greater care in habits set off with gold or silver, joined their sweet voices in the song, or formed the unpremeditated dance. Mingled with the happy group were to be seen Mandeville's sailors, like those of Ferdinand in the enchanted island, beguiling the hours with various rude pastimes. Each of these honest tars was decorated with an enormous

bunch of the beautiful Ionian rose in his bosom,—*a flower which, but for its profusion, must have been any where most highly valued.*

"My fellows have made themselves very fine, I see," said Mandeville, with a faint smile, and looking at Ellen; "were not the offering degraded, I had intended to request your acceptance of some of those flowers, which so far surpass, in scent and colour, the pride of our English gardens."

"The degradation can be easily redeemed," answered Ellen, laughing, "by the universal and fashionable receipt—difficulty and danger. My true woman's heart is at this moment fixed upon that glowing branch which smiles so invitingly on yonder cliff, "not to be come at by the willing hand," and I commission you, George Newborough," she continued, with well assumed seriousness, "to procure it forthwith, at the

command of your sovereign and liege lady."

"If you can prove to me satisfactorily," replied Newborough, making use of a very favourite phrase of his, "that the roses growing on the cliff are necessarily and inherently better than those we have near at hand, I shall not object to the uselessness and difficulty of the undertaking; but I rather suspect the contrary: flowers at a distance look gay, which are often discovered, upon a near approach, to be half withered or overblown — nay, frequently ——"

"Barbarian!" archly interrupted Ellen; "a Contadino would more readily perform his fair one's bidding;" and at the same moment she approached one of the shepherds, and reiterated the request she had just made to Mr. Newborough. But vainly was it breathed "through rows of pearl over beds of roses;" the Italian Ellen spoke was by far too pure for her auditor to understand. She next had re-

course to her lately acquired Sicilian *patois*, but with equal ill success. The person she addressed replied, in a mixture of bad Italian and Greek, that he was unable to comprehend her. The first to laugh at her own disappointment, Ellen prepared to pursue her walk, when, turning round, she missed Captain Mandeville.

"He is gone, to attempt to gratify your wish, Ellen," said Mrs. Fitzalbert, gravely.

"Captain Mandeville is a libel upon our gallantry," Mr. Montresor added, with a languid smile.

As they were speaking, Raymond returned, bearing in his hand the prize for which he had, unhesitatingly, risked himself. As he presented it, he whispered, with an expression of tender and reproachful anguish, "Oh, Ellen, if I am doomed indeed to suffer, do not add cruel, and, surely, unnecessary aggravations to my sorrows."

Tears filled the expressive eyes of Miss Fitzalbert. To conceal them from observation, she looked down, affecting to be engrossed in admiration of the roses.

" It is a pity," observed Mr. Montresor, " we cannot, among us, furnish a copy of verses in honour of that matchless flower. Surely the peerless rose of the Ionian Islands merits such a tribute. Unfortunately, " the gods" have not " made me poetical;" and when I have sometimes attempted a flying courtship of the Muses, the discouragement I have met with, and the repulses I have invariably experienced from all their ladyships, have thoroughly disgusted me with the character of a rhymester."

" There is a well-known couplet describing a gentleman in your predicament," observed Newborough, coolly.

You beat your pate and fancy wit will come :
Knock as you please, there's — n-n-n-nobody at home.

The air of study and premeditation, which Newborough's difficulty of utterance gave to these unexpected sallies, always rendered them the more likely to give offence. As he, with great difficulty, stammered out the last line, Mrs. Fitzalbert, fearful of its effect upon a gentleman unaccustomed to her nephew's happy knack of illustration, gave the discourse a new turn, by proposing, herself, to be the poet of the Ionian Rose.

At their next meeting she kept her promise, by producing the following lines.

TO THE

ROSE OF THE IONIAN ISLANDS.

Queen of the wave! that, like a bride,
Shinest, in orient charms confest,
Say, wherefore should thy beauty's pride
Transcend each flowret of the West? —
To thee I sound the tuneful shell,
Oh! breathe around thy balmy spell,
That laps the sense in soft repose —
Ionian Rose!

When, torn from Naxos' rocky shore,
And forced to brave the Tyrrhene main,
On thy bright leaves did Bacchus pour
The nectar juice of rubied grain?
Perhaps the sad Cyrene's* tear
For Aristæus' fate severe
Gave them their soft, ambrosial dew,
And heavenly hue.

Fair rising from her native sea
Did Beauty's Queen one glance bestow,
Or Love's unpitying deity
Bend o'er thy cups his fateful bow,
And wound them, in relentless hour,
Even like the "little western flower?"†
Is it to that thy petals owe
Their purple glow?

Friend of the Mariner! he hails,
Though distant yet, thy welcome smile;
While odours scent th' Ionian gales
Unknown to famed Fernandez' isle.

* The Sea-nymph Cyrene.

† *Oberon.* Yet, mark'd I where the bolt of Cupid fell:
It fell upon a little western flower,
Before, milk-white: now purple with Love's wound,
And maidens call it, Love in idleness.
SHAKSPEARE.—*Midsummer Night's Dream.*

Oh! not the hallowed Cross of Light *,
That flames with holiest splendors bright,
More lovely, to his eye, can be,
Sweet flower! than thee.

Fair daughter of a favored clime
Still loveliest bloom thy peers among!
For Genius, since the march of Time,
Hallowed thy birthplace with his song:
And breathed his sacred influence o'er
Each wave that kiss'd Phæacia's shore,
And bless'd the land where brightly glow?
Th' Ionian Rose!

These verses, when read, were not received with the compliments usually paid to amateurs. Newborough could never say a flattering thing; Mandeville was entirely taken up with the interests of his passion; and Mr. Montresor was uncommonly flat, languid, and spirit-

* It has been observed that nothing presents to the mariner so lively an idea of distance from home as the sight of stars and constellations unknown in our part of the world. Among these, the Cross of the South is the most remarkable.

less. He had indulged himself, that day, with an unusual dose of opium: and though, since his residence at Athens, he had adopted the practice of taking it in quantities, it had never before appeared to have so completely benumbed his mental powers. On Newborough's venturing a clumsy joke upon that subject, to which he ascribed his friend's unusual taciturnity, Mr. Montresor maintained, on the contrary, that opium was "superlatively calculated to brighten the intellectual faculties," and was so far piqued, as to do every thing in his power to shake off the lethargy into which he seemed plunged: he praised the poem, although he had not heard a word of it; talked of roses and verses, and sentiment and poetry; and ended with pouring a profusion of compliments to Ellen, whom he had marked out as a conquest from the moment of his appearing on the island.

" Reserve those fine speeches for one who may venture to listen to them : you need not go out of the family, Mr. Montresor," returned Ellen playfully, " what think you of my cousin Constantia ?"

At the mention of that name, so suddenly pronounced, the features of Ernest Montresor assumed a pensive cast, while a sigh, soft and deep-drawn, such a sigh as he had breathed to the remembrance of the " maid of Athens," showed that poor Constantia retained a place in his gratitude at least — that quality which has not been ill-defined as the " memory of the heart."

" Now, by that sentimental sigh," resumed Ellen, " I see my cousin retains more influence over you than you are, perhaps, yourself aware of." Having thus lightly touched upon that string, she ceased. The harp sends forth the sweetest sounds that is swept by a zephyr's wing, To dwell long upon

a subject is sometimes the way to destroy the rising interest a gentle hint creates; Ellen resolved, however, to renew it the first favourable opportunity. Meantime, Mr. Montresor had taken refuge in his "superlatives," and was talking so much and so fast about his friend the Veli Pasha, and Ali Pasha, and the superlative delights of a boar-hunt in Epirus, that he had quite caught Mandeville's attention, to whom he principally addressed himself: he related his having, more than once, formed parties with English gentlemen to partake of this diversion in Albania or Epirus, and roused Captain Mandeville's curiosity to such a height, that before they separated, they agreed nothing could be more delightful than an excursion amid the wild, romantic scenery those countries afford, either for the purposes of hunting or taking views; and Mandeville, forgetting his former pique against

Montresor, was eager, with all the ardour of youth, when it first starts a new object, to make the necessary arrangements for their projected party of pleasure.

CHAP. VI.

And, as he sojourn'd on the Ægean isles,
Wooed all their love, and treasured all their smiles.
CAMPBELL. *Pleasures of Hope.*

FROM the sensibility manifested by Montresor at the mention of Constantia's name, Ellen flattered herself that the moment was arrived to put her benevolent plan in execution. Montresor interested her, as the brother of a friend she had once tenderly loved; Constantia, as a young person who was soon to be allied to her, and whose sufferings, however impatiently borne, she contemplated with sympathy and pity. She aspired to reunite them, and it was in pursuance of this plan, that Ellen had assumed that appearance of friendship and confidence towards Montresor, that had given such torment to Mandeville.

Miss Fitzalbert knew not yet all she had to contend with. During his sojourn in Greece and the Islands, (for he had visited several of them,) Mr. Montresor had been much more intent on the impression he made on the hearts of Grecian beauties, than in acquiring additional stores of ancient or modern learning. The good reception that his birth, fortune, and appearance generally ensured him, had completely turned his head, as it infected his conversation: Ellen, however, did not despair. One day he found her employed in copying a miniature. It was Constantia's. Montresor asked to look at it.

"Is it not beautiful? You can judge whether it is equal to the original Mr. Montresor," she said. Ernest took it up, and held it so as to conceal part of his countenance from Ellen; still she thought she had already perceived embarrassment upon it. The discourse then naturally fell upon Constantia.

Ellen began by endeavouring to alarm his jealousy, and urged him, if he retained any serious thoughts of her cousin, not to trifle away his own happiness by a neglect, which must appear in the most disadvantageous contrast to the admiration and attention by which Constantia was surrounded. She mentioned the intelligence, lately communicated to her in a letter from England, of Miss Newborough's having, at that moment, two every way unexceptionable offers submitted to her choice; reserving, like an artful orator, for her *peroration*, the circumstance that Constantia absolutely refused to listen to either of them. Ellen rather wished to let the first part of her information make its impression, and it seemed to answer her intention: the poor, deserted Constantia, shining as an admired English belle, appeared to rise a little in estimation with her former admirer; still, Mr. Montresor was not entirely won; for, turning to Ellen, in a

marked though playful manner, he asked her, like king Richard, "if the remote cause of the misunderstanding between him and Miss Newborough, was not, in some degree, to blame, as well as the person she seemed so much inclined to condemn." — "I profess to you, Miss Fitzalbert," he continued, "I was sincerely attached to your charming cousin, and would have started at the idea of change, when, in a moment, all my resolutions were overthrown, and a new idea of female excellence was presented to me that rendered other attractions wholly tasteless, — that ——"

Here Montresor paused, to see if some mantling blush, some half-repressed expression of pleasure, did not betray in Miss Fitzalbert a faint reminiscence of the scene to which he alluded; but she was, in reality, entirely at a loss to divine his meaning. He, therefore, was forced to resume. "It was in the reading-room of a public library; — you may

have forgot the circumstance — the place —the person—but *I* shall never forget it " while memory holds a seat in this distracted ——"

" A truce with heroics, Mr. Montresor," said Ellen, gravely; and Ernest, awed by her manner, more soberly continued: " Two ladies particularly attracted my attention. The youngest was seated at a table, opposite to an elderly gentleman, whom I afterwards discovered to be a distinguished artist, but one who had the misfortune to be born deaf and dumb. With this gentleman the young lady was carrying on, by signs, an apparently animated conversation; but the dexterity with which she availed herself of this method of mute intelligence, the varying changes of her countenance, which seconded to admiration the velocity with which her snowy fingers described the letters, altogether formed a picture so singular and interesting, that I longed to be possessed of the index

which conveyed her quick-succeeding thoughts. I envied the dumb man whom her humanity selected as ——"

"Surely," interrupted Ellen, in a manner half complimentary, half playful, "Mr. Montresor cannot possibly envy the dumb! — he who would deprive us of so much amusement, so much valuable information, if unfortunately labouring under a similar impediment ——"

"The dumb gentleman," resumed Mr. Montresor, "at length rose to depart; and I was not long in learning that the fair one who had so much struck me, possessed a mind of equal intelligence with her countenance. In a conversation upon books, which she held with the elder lady, whom I guessed to be her mother, she evinced a taste and discrimination — a discrimination and taste, in short, that ——"

Here Mr. Montresor interrupted himself. He never was happy in describing even those excellencies that had made a

real impression on his fancy: he, therefore, hastened to the catastrophe, perceiving that Ellen, by this time, was perfectly conscious she was the person designated, as she now recollected her mute conversation with the dumb gentleman in the library, though not aware, at the time, that Montresor was among the number of spectators.

"When the ladies left the shop," continued Ernest, "I asked their names, but in vain; they were strangers, not subscribers, and supposed to be new arrivals. Had it been in my power to continue my enquiries, I should, no doubt, have been more successful; but I was obliged to set off for ———shire that very day. Business, indispensable business, commanded my attention, and I was forced to obey the summons. I again saw Miss Newborough; but, oh, with what different feelings from those with which I had parted from her! An image of perfection was enshrined in my

heart; a picture of beauty — of merit, so superior — so very superior — a new standard of female excellence, to which I mentally referred her every look and action. Judge if they did not suffer by the comparison! Hating myself for my involuntary fault, miserable and unsettled in my mind, unable any longer to return the -a-amiable partiality with which your fair cousin honoured me, am I to blame," concluded Mr. Montresor, with a look which he intended should be resistless, "if I gladly availed myself of Lord Trelawney's* proposal that I should go abroad? — I trusted, by that step, gradually to loosen the chain that could no longer have charms for either of us, or to rid myself of a fatal impression, which rendered me unworthy of the good fortune that, in another quarter, awaited me. How little did I foresee it was to be confirmed by a fresh meeting with the charming object that had inspired the only real passion I ever felt!"

In this statement there was as much truth, as in the statements of vain persons, there generally is. Attached, in early youth, to Constantia Newborough, a winter in London, and the flatteries of the ladies, soon suggested to Ernest Montresor that taste, elegance, and high birth like his, ought not to be sacrificed to an insipid country girl, as they scrupled not to term his former flame.

Just at the moment of this ebullition of youthful vanity and folly, when his heart was only seeking a pretext to be inconstant, the sight of Miss Fitzalbert, under peculiarly whimsical and interesting circumstances, — her highly finished manners, foreign air, and truly distinguished style of beauty, fired his fancy; and though prevented, as he said, by circumstances, from following up his pursuit, it completed his distaste for the more unpretending graces of Constantia. The fair Incognita of the library became his *beau idéal* — his mental standard alike of mind

and manners; and he determined that, if ever he sacrificed his precious liberty, it should only be to a woman equally superior to every thing he had yet beheld.

Undazzled by the romantic mode of conquest ascribed to her, the kind and benevolent Ellen, with a heart truly devoted to the cause in which she had embarked, exerted all her influence with this willing victim of vanity rather than passion, to recall him to a sense of the claims of another. While she allowed him to hope that, if he lost no time in reviving his interest in Constantia's heart, he might still be preferred above every pretender, she dexterously hinted that, if he neglected her advice, Miss Newborough's friends might take advantage of her tender and affectionate disposition to induce her to accede to their united wishes. Constantia, she acknowledged, had as yet remained firm to her first choice; but how long that firmness

might last, unsupported by the assurances of reciprocal attachment, it was for Mr. Montresor to determine.

With that delicacy which woman alone can command, Ellen then drew a picture of her cousin's conduct up to this period, the most calculated to excite admiration for the dignity and consistency, the purity and elevation, of the attachment that inspired it.

Much as the romantic Constantia was indebted, in this representation, to the partial eloquence of her friend, it did not fail in producing its effect. During the time Miss Fitzalbert was speaking, Mr. Montresor walked up and down the room in considerable perturbation, enacting all the airs of a tragedy hero with very good effect. When she had concluded, he made some warm exclamations against the waywardness of his fate, and, truth to say, really felt and thought nearly half what he expressed.

"Enough," said Ellen, coldly: "I

have done what I considered as my duty. You know, Mr. Montresor, it is impossible *I* can ever be any thing to you more than a friend. At least I thought you were apprised ——"

Here some grievous recollection seemed to come across the unhappy Ellen, and almost to choke her voice. After a pause she resumed, "If you wish to secure an interest with one, surely, in every respect, *as* worthy, this is the moment, or she is most probably lost to you for ever."

Mr. Montresor listened with earnest attention: his resolution was soon taken. He was determined not to be outdone in generosity by Constantia. The enthusiasm of Ellen in friendship's cause seemed to have reached to his soul, and lighted there a kindred spark. He no longer acted or spoke like himself, but like a very superior being; influenced by *her* thoughts, and impelled by *her* agency.

Mr. Montresor was not wholly desti-

tute of the quality of imagination; but it was an imagination rather of the speculative than the creative sort. *His* was not a mind to strike out the first thought of a great or a worthy action; but, present such an image to it, and he instantly bestowed the meed of his warm and unqualified approbation. Not destitute of strength of mind on some occasions, he was continually haunted with a confused idea that, as a grandson of the great Trelawney, something striking, or something brilliant was expected of him. The same impression followed him into private life; and this was the real history of his admiration of Ellen. But then, if it was a fine thing to wear the chains of Miss Fitzalbert — of one whose beauty and attainments were the theme of praise in England, of admiration in France, of adoration in Italy, — there was also something interestingly romantic in being the selected object for whom a beautiful young woman refused the most advan-

tageous prospects of establishment. He had not a bad heart: the picture of Miss Newborough's constancy interested and touched it. "I will not lose another day before I write!" he exclaimed. "Perhaps I may be yet in time to save her — dear, persecuted Constantia!"

After a little more conversation on the subject, Mr. Montresor left Miss Fitzalbert, as he said, to write; and Ellen had leisure to reflect on the success of her plan — a success that alone consoled her for having condescended to appear, for a moment, in the character of a coquette, a character which, of all others, she most despised. But the inconveniences arising from her supposed caprice were not yet at an end. Knowing that, on the morrow, the hunting-party, consisting of Mandeville, Montresor, Newborough, and some gentlemen of Corfu, were to push off, in Mandeville's yacht, for the opposite coast, she waited, but in vain, during the whole

evening, for Raymond to call and bid her farewell. A cold damp struck upon her heart: — he was going to expose himself to danger, and, perhaps, thought her no longer sufficiently interested in him to feel anxious on that account. The necessity of concealing these thoughts rendered the sense of her misery more acute, while busy fancy whispered, " A week ago he would not have acted thus."

In the morning, however, he took a hurried, yet, she thought, a tender leave of her. The gentlemen were all in the highest spirits, preparing for this inroad on the domains of Ali Pasha; and the novelty of the sport, none of them, except Montresor, having ever hunted the boar, added zest, if it added danger, to the enterprise.

" Don't you think, mamma," said Ellen, after they were gone, " that Captain Mandeville, in his hunting-dress, looked very like the Meleager we saw at the Princess Visconti's?"

" I hope," replied Mrs. Fitzalbert, smiling, " you don't intend to intimate that his end will be as disastrous as that of the destroyer of the Calydonian boar!"

" God forbid!" Ellen replied, with an involuntary shudder. But the idea, thus thoughtlessly suggested, threw a gloom over her fancy, which effectually destroyed her cheerfulness for the remainder of the day.

CHAP. VII.

Oh, weep not thus — we both shall know,
Ere long, a happier doom:
There is a place of rest below,
Where thou and I shall surely go,
And sweetly sleep, released from woe;
Within the tomb.

CAMÖENS.

As the hunting-party gone over to Epirus had made preparations for a stay of several days, Ellen had no immediate pretext for expressing any anxiety on their account. She was not, however, long left in this state of tranquillity. Some days sooner than she had calculated on their return, she observed, from her window, Alexi (Mandeville's favourite Greek servant) in conversation with Ida, a young girl of the country, that Mrs. Fitzalbert had just taken to wait upon her. Alexi was wringing his

hands, and using all the gesticulations of the most violent despair.

Instantly Ellen was with them; and, before she had time to recollect the construction that might be put upon her conduct, had addressed a hundred questions in a breath to the afflicted domestic.

To her eager enquiries whether his master had been wounded in the chase, the Greek replied, "No, no, miss! very good hunting—very good sport: Massa kill him great boar his self; but after—Oh my poor master!"

Agonised with uncertainty, Ellen begged of Alexi to tell her quickly what had happened; but could only get from him broken exclamations, which his imperfect knowledge of her language rendered still more unintelligible. She gathered the names of Mandeville and Newborough.

"Oh, sad, sad day," resumed Alexi, "when Massa and Mr. Newborough fight!"

Ellen stood aghast; — fight! was it possible that the unobservant, the cold-hearted Newborough, had at length taken umbrage at Mandeville, and provoked him to a quarrel? — Trembling she exclaimed, " You do not say Captain Mandeville and Mr. Newborough fought?"

" Oh, no, no — not together," replied the weeping Alexi, again wringing his hands, " but fight great Turk—Mr. Newborough fight—but Ali Pasha — oh, my poor master!"

The wildest apprehensions seized Ellen's mind She had heard much of the savage cruelty and vindictive temper of this lawless chief: perhaps, notwithstanding a show of amity, Captain Mandeville had in some way or other incurred his displeasure. The thought was agony. Fortunately at this moment the appearance of Mr. Montresor seemed to promise the explanation which it was vain to hope from Alexi. He approached her with respectful friendliness. —

" Do not be alarmed," he said, with a considerateness of voice and manner for which her heart thanked him, " our premature return is not caused by any serious accident; he is safe, I assure you — safe and unhurt."

" Oh, bless you for that word!" exclaimed the agitated Ellen; but soon recollecting that Newborough must be, in Montresor's opinion, the principal object of her anxiety, and that to Newborough, therefore, his assurances of safety probably referred, her greater solicitude respecting Mandeville's fate was increased by the difficulty of framing farther enquiries. Montresor, however, perceiving she was perfectly ignorant of the late events, resumed —

" It was a trifling quarrel, originating in the most ridiculous cause imaginable. We had excellent sport the first day — roused two boars, and killed one of them. We afterwards pursued the foe into Albania.

"In the intervals of our diversion, Mandeville amused himself taking sketches of the surrounding country : — a superlatively delightful talent, taking views — regret incalculably I could never apply to it. — We were very well treated, and were conversing quite sociably with some of Ali Pasha's officers, — making ourselves as intelligible as we could by dint of a mixture of Arnaout — Romaic, — fifty different dialects, I believe — superlatively easy for a person tolerably well grounded in Greek to become master of the modern Romaic :— when Newborough, unfortunately, took it in his head to find fault with a point of discipline observed by them, and to insist on the superiority of us English in that particular — superlatively imprudent, you will allow — you know what sort of gentry they are. — He had hardly uttered his opinion, in the most modest and gentle manner imaginable, when a lowering of brows and clashing of arms showed us

what we had to expect. Newborough endeavoured to explain;—after talking a great deal, he only made the matter ten times worse. One fierce fellow exclaimed that Ali Pasha was reflected upon ——

"I have little more to tell you," said Montresor, interrupting himself on observing how pale Ellen looked.—"Without the smallest warning, the dastard drew his dirk. Mandeville, forgetting he was unarmed, exclaimed he would not see his countryman butchered; and rushing between Newborough and the enraged Albanian, received the blow on his own shoulder. The wound was deep, but not perilous," resumed Montresor, looking compassionately at Ellen, though her emotion was by him attributed merely to the natural force of female terror. "On seeing the blood they had spilt, the miscreants seemed recalled to a sense of the enormity of their behaviour, and to feel some confusion for the past; but the dominions of Ali

Pasha were no longer safe for us. This tale had only to arrive at the ears of the ferocious chieftain, to entitle us to the pleasures of a perpetual imprisonment. We, therefore, bound up Mandeville's wound, affording him the best assistance we were able, by means of a Greek in his suite, who had been something of a surgeon. We then hastened as much as as possible our return to this island. Though suffering, certainly, from the necessity of an immediate removal, Mandeville is now in a state of comparative comfort, and, I hope, doing extremely well. Newborough, who reproaches himself as the cause of the accident, and who is assuredly the best fellow in the universe, will not leave him; and therefore dispatched me to inform his friends of the true reason of our abrupt re-appearance, fearing that which has unfortunately proved the case,—that some exaggerated report might reach and needlessly alarm you."

There was in Montresor's manner a degree of studied caution; and a vague fear haunted Ellen that he had not told the worst. In his whole conduct, on this occasion, he had evinced a degree of kindness and goodness of heart beyond what she had imagined him to possess.

Released from the restraint Montresor's presence imposed, Miss Fitzalbert flew to her mother with the mingled tidings her visitor had conveyed. But poor Ellen calculated too much upon her own strength; scarcely had she opened her lips to recount Mandeville's danger, when her tongue refused its office, and, after a second vain attempt, she sunk, speechless, on the floor: after a few moments of insensibility, a copious shower of tears seemed to relieve her almost bursting heart; while Mrs. Fitzalbert, hanging over with all the agonising solicitude of maternal tenderness, besought her to explain what it was that had thus distressed her.

"Confide it to me, my Ellen," she said, in the most soothing tone; "you have just left Mr. Montresor—did he say any thing of Mandeville — of Newborough, that—"

"Newborough," exclaimed Ellen, with frantic wildness, "a phlegmatic, heartless, senseless fool! who will never alter till he has involved the best and dearest in the calamities incident to his unpardonable absurdity."

She was soon made sensible of the violence of what she had uttered by the visible change in the expressive countenance of Mrs. Fitzalbert. Turning very pale, and looking stedfastly at Ellen, "It is as I suspected," she involuntarily exclaimed: recovering, however, almost in a moment, her serenity, she requested from her daughter a particular recital of every circumstance that had passed.

A little time before, friendship would have prompted to Mrs. Fitzalbert the idea of extending her hospitality to the sufferer

and bestowing on him every care and attention; but now, her ideas had undergone a painful change, and a message of enquiry, accompanied by an offer of any thing her house or garden could afford to administer to the comfort of the invalid, was the utmost extent of compassion she could be induced to call forth on the occasion. How different were the feelings of the mother and daughter! During the period that intervened before the return of the messenger, Ellen, incapable of rest, paced the garden a hundred times, alike insensible of heat or fatigue; heedless of the repeated entreaties of Ida that she would consider her health, and not risk it by such an imprudence during the burning fervour of a meridian sun.

"It does me good, I thank you, Ida," was all she replied to the well-meant endeavours of her attendant; and, her mind wholly absorbed in one object, she continued mechanically to repeat these

words, without annexing to them any specific meaning. The one reigning idea which possessed her, perhaps, unconsciously influenced this avarice of expression; it seemed as if she feared, in every word she breathed, to steal a thought from Mandeville.

The answer that at length arrived was by no means satisfactory. Symptoms of fever had appeared, and the climate was much against the patient's speedy recovery: a night must intervene — a night of watchfulness and agony on Ellen's part, before she could send again. During this period of torturing suspense, every afflictive circumstance that an active and restless imagination could devise, was, by turns, conjured up by hers, to increase the horrors of the moment.

Oh, let not any actual evil be compared to that most dreadful of all sufferings, suspense — the only one that admits not of being mitigated by resignation; for, to experience that sentiment,

we must at least know to *what* we are to be resigned; whereas, the blind, helpless ignorance of those that suffer under that cruel state of mind, constitutes its principal torment.

Unable to rest, she started from her feverish couch, and looked out at the night, a night of surpassing beauty: her windows opened upon the terrace of the garden. An irresistible impression that, in the air, she should be easier, induced her to rise and dress: hastily she entered the garden, eager to fly from herself; she traversed the terrace, approached an alcove at the end of it, and for a moment sat down in it, hoping, by change of place, to experience a change of sensation: in vain — the restless, pursuing, overwhelming consciousness of misery followed her every where, and, much as she was reserved yet to suffer, Ellen often declared nothing equalled the wretchedness of that eternal night.

As soon as she could hope to find

Mrs. Fitzalbert awake, Ellen was at her mother's bed-side, and reminded her of the duty of sending early to enquire after "poor Captain Mandeville." To this Mrs. Fitzalbert assented; but it was with a sigh, that did not escape the tender vigilance of Ellen. She now saw all that passed in her daughter's mind, and meditated a sacrifice, in her own, which it shook her already weakened frame only to contemplate. The accounts on this day were much better; the appearance of Raymond's wound had taken a favourable turn. It is unnecessary to follow up the progress of amendment; in a few days, the elegant Captain Mandeville, almost as handsome as ever, and only the more dangerous from having been in danger, was able to pay his respects, in person, to the ladies, and thank them for the interest they had taken in his sufferings.

The succeeding interview of these too "conscious lovers," was a severe

trial to Mrs. Fitzalbert. The modest, yet tender and glowing joy of Ellen; the manly and repressed sensibility of Mandeville, formed a picture that wrung her heart, and interested every feeling.

Poor Ellen's satisfaction, however, was not destined to be of long duration. Mrs. Fitzalbert, who had appeared nervous and restless through the day, and threatened with a return of all her old complaints, became, towards evening, so ill as to be obliged to lie down. A French physician was immediately called in, who, after feeling her pulse, asked his patient, with a very mysterious air, if she experienced an acute pain in her head. On her answering in the affirmative, he shook his head with an expression of still more importance, and, glancing superciliously at Ida, who was busy attending her lady, asked how long she had been in their service; on Ellen's mentioning the number of days, his countenance assumed an alarming aspect. Looking at

Ida's clothes, which were very showy, in the fashion of her country, he half muttered, " You might as well have burnt those rich dresses."

A light of horror beamed upon the mind of Ellen. After the Doctor had written his prescription and quitted Mrs. Fitzalbert, she addressed him in French, conjuring him to tell her the worst.

" That young person has been more about your mother than any one else in the family," he said.

" More — much more — my father has scarcely seen her, and I do not require her attendance."

" And since her being with you, she has been always dressed as she is to-day?" he added, with a look of anxiety.

" Always—no," replied Ellen, with a suddenly painful recollection, " Ida has only worn those fine clothes today and yesterday, on the occasion of some festival of which she told me the name, but which I totally forget." — Then, starting from her seat, " Oh, sir, do not deceive me,"

Ellen exclaimed; and the remembrance of the dreadful scourge of the East, of which she had lately heard but too often, chilled her blood; "You do not mean that there has been at Corfu any epidemic — any symptom of plague that —"

"We have no such thing as the plague," returned the cautious Frenchman, rather angrily; "lately, to be sure, we had some threatenings of the *Corfu fever*, and I remember attending that young person, and strenuously advising her to destroy every thing she wore, which, from the richness of the materials; the inhabitants of Corfu are always unwilling to do.

"Perceiving the mute despair with which Ellen listened to this solemn intimation, the physician humanely resumed —"As this woman is no longer liable to infection, she is the properest person to attend on Mrs. Fitzalbert. Since the evil has been taken in time, I have no doubt that we shall conquer it; meantime, it is your duty, my dear madam, to avoid, and to

persuade Mr. Fitzalbert also that he should avoid, the possibility of danger; you may depend upon all your wishes being strictly —"

"I shall take precautions for my father's safety," replied Ellen, firmly, "but *my* station is by my mother, and nothing shall induce me to resign it."

Sincerely attached to his wife, Mr. Fitzalbert's consternation, when informed of her danger, was extreme.

After providing every thing for his comfort, during their temporary separation, with an activity that suspended, for a moment, the sense of her own wretchedness, Ellen quitted him to return to her mother, whom she found rather worse than she had left her. During the night, Mrs. Fitzalbert's thoughts appeared to wander: raising herself, she looked with an air of curiosity, yet with sufficient deliberation, around the room, and then asked, in a plaintive but calm voice, "Where is Mr. Fitzalbert —

where is George — where is Ellen — what! all — all gone — am I then grown so very dreadful?"

"I — I am here," said Ellen, almost drowned in tears, "I will never leave you."

"Do you say so, Ida — you are very good to supply Ellen's place — you see Ellen is gone — her own blood has no claim on her — I said so when she deserted poor George — Ellen's heart is with the stranger."

This idea, the last which her reason had acknowledged, was, now, the one which Mrs. Fitzalbert most frequently repeated. She continued, from time to time, to touch upon that string, and it was ever with such mournful variations as went to the very heart of Ellen. She knew perfectly her mother's wishes; Mrs. Fitzalbert's partial attachment to the family of her brother, and her desire to unite it, by the strongest ties, to her own. She determined to sacrifice every feeling of her heart to the happiness of a parent so

dear; and only waited for the confirmation of Mrs. Fitzalbert's returning reason, to make her the solemn depositary of her renewed vows to unite her fate to Newborough's.

Towards morning, Mrs. Fitzalbert appeared much calmer; she knew her daughter, and addressing her by her name, said, "I wish to speak to you, my dear Ellen, upon a subject which has, lately, occupied my mind, and on which, if I delay much longer, I may not be able to express my wishes. I have read your heart — Mandeville, I know, only waits for the possibility of my approbation to declare his attachment, — I consent to it, — I undertake to reconcile Newborough to it, and to endure the whole blame myself. Let not my foolish plans embitter the days of the being most dear to me. What my former hopes and desires were it matters not — a short period must terminate my earthly career: and —" she paused — she had expressed herself thus far slowly, and at broken inter-

vals. Ellen saw the struggle between maternal tenderness on the one hand, and the hopes, the wishes, the plans of a life on the other. Her noble spirit disdained the sacrifice. The empire Mrs. Fitzalbert possessed over her daughter's mind was the most absolute, for it was the empire of love. This influence was the growth of a life: it could be suspended, but not annihilated, by an after attachment. Filial piety was still the governing principle of Ellen's actions: to see which way her mother's wishes pointed, and not to follow them was, to her, impossible.

"Do not think me so weak, my dearest mother," she earnestly exclaimed. "What! shall a daughter of yours — shall a Fitzalbert reflect disgrace upon the spotless name from which she sprung by forfeiting her plighted word — by foregoing an engagement voluntarily contracted? — never. — Hear me repeat the vow that —"

"Do not repeat it," said Mrs. Fitzalbert, tenderly, yet with evidently reviving satisfaction; "at least not unless you can conscientiously do so."

At that moment Ellen thought she could. The creature of feeling, agonised with apprehensions for her mother's safety, she believed, with all the high-wrought enthusiasm of impassioned souls, that a greater exertion than that required of her could be made, with ease, to ensure peace to a parent's parting hour. She solemnly and deliberately pronounced the vow, and the faint lightning of joy that passed over Mrs. Fitzalbert's faded countenance was her momentary reward. She had made the greatest effort of which she was capable, in once proposing to liberate Ellen. Her faltering voice, her trembling agitation, showed the anguish it cost her: it was not in her power to repeat it. On the contrary, believing her daughter's reason satisfied, however her imagination might, for a moment,

have wandered, Mrs. Fitzalbert indulged in the pleasure of commending the superior merits of the protector to whom she was about to consign her.

"Do not think me influenced by partiality"—she said, "by the strong resemblance, both in mind and person, George bears to my dear departed brother—were he a stranger, I should still think him more calculated to ensure my Ellen's permanent happiness than any other."

Her mother now appeared exhausted, and little able to continue the conversation. Feeling, however, "the ruling passion strong in death," she adverted, at intervals, to the subject of a dormant peerage in the family of Fitzalbert, to which her husband, though possessing a sufficient, and more than a sufficient, share of family pride, had always been too indolent to lay claim, but which might possibly be revived, at some future period, in favour of Ellen and Newborough.

However indifferent, at the moment, to such subjects, Miss Fitzalbert religiously promised to urge the point to her future lord.

Unacquainted yet with the nature of her danger, Mrs. Fitzalbert now expressed a great desire to see George, and to hear both her children, as she termed them, confirm their mutual engagement in her presence. But, though immediately sent for, no motive, however strong, could induce Newborough to approach the chamber of sickness. Scarcely was his refusal (which Ellen took care to temper so as to prevent its hurting her feelings) communicated to Mrs. Fitzalbert, when one of the attendants informed Ellen that a gentleman below, who declared his business to be of the most urgent nature, requested to speak to her. With a palpitating heart Ellen descended; and, before she had advanced many steps in the room, found herself

once more in the dear, the dreaded presence of Mandeville.

He was equipped completely in his sailor-like costume, and seemed prepared for immediate departure. His simple and manly, yet interesting and elegant appearance, struck her so forcibly, as recalling the first moment of their meeting after her return to Sicily, that it overcame her firmness. She burst into tears.

Advancing hastily towards her, "I have been with your father, Ellen," he said, "and have succeeded in persuading him. He sends me to you; and, thus empowered, I venture to urge you—delay is destruction—it is but too true—a fever that was brought here a few months ago has broke out again with aggravated symptoms—we yet have time to fly: my yacht is in readiness; hasten your preparations."—

"Oh no, it is impossible!" replied

Ellen, in a desponding tone: "my mother is already too ill."

"She has not been ill above a day," resumed Mandeville: "with care she could be, surely, conveyed to her carriage, and on board my ship, where every accommodation awaits her. Her only chance of safety is in a change of place. Once breathing the sea air — once removed from this fatal climate —"

"It cannot be," interrupted Ellen; the accumulated horrors of her fate bursting more clearly on her view: "her removal is impossible — rather do you seek safety in flight — leave me — avoid me — fly this fatal place!"

"Never"—exclaimed the ardent, impetuous Mandeville: "never, while you remain within these infected walls! Though unable to see you, I still will wander near you — will still endeavour to support your father — to —— but can it not be? — Reflect, I beseech you, to

what you expose yourself—would it not yet be possible ——"

"No, no," the heart-wrung Ellen replied: "she is dying, and we must perish together."

"Oh, Ellen, do I leave you thus—thus see you, perhaps, for the last time!"—exclaimed Mandeville, clasping her to his bosom with all the distracted energy—all the sacred purity of despairing love: "now—now, when I most adore you for your filial tenderness—your—"

"For pity's sake forbear!" exclaimed Ellen, struggling to disengage herself; while the active solicitude, the fearless devotion of her impassioned and gallant sailor, contrasted with the selfish timidity, the cold precaution of Newborough, in a manner on which she durst not, for a moment, trust herself to dwell. "Oh, Raymond, if one affliction yet remains to be poured on this devoted head, it is the apprehension of your being exposed to danger similar to mine."

A summons to Mrs. Fitzalbert closed this distressing conference; but the moment of heroism with poor Ellen was past. The sight of Mandeville, almost immediately after her lips had confirmed the fatal, irrevocable vow, was too much for her. Other duties prevented the painful contemplation. Notwithstanding all that skill, and all that wealth could do, the already shattered constitution of Mrs. Fitzalbert rapidly gave way beneath the encroaching power of this additional malady. Ellen attended her indefatigably; and, as if in reward for her filial piety, experienced that exemption from contagion which is sometimes observed to fall to the lot of those in whom the ardent affections of the mind surmount all feelings of personal inconvenience or danger.

It is distressing to give the mournful details of approaching dissolution. Mrs. Fitzalbert gradually sunk under her malady, consoled to the last by the con-

sciousness of her daughter's tenderness, trust in her obedience, and hope of her future happiness. But what could support the poor deserted Ellen!—With a heart of the most heavenly temper, the pernicious instructions of a betrayer of her trust had deprived her of that celestial hope and confidence which could alone befriend her. All the past was gloom — all the future despair. She leant not upon the "Rock of Ages," and yet her tender and impassioned spirit was not formed, in any other refuge, to have rest.

Poor Mr. Fitzalbert, really overcome by this unforeseen calamity, was obliged to the care of George Newborough (who at the last behaved with propriety and attention) for arranging every thing for the departure of his now diminished family in an English vessel. Newborough accompanied them; and it was Mrs. Fitzalbert's dying injunction, that her daughter should not wait the ex-

piration of the year to bestow her hand upon her cousin. The ceremony was to be performed as soon as it could conveniently take place after their arrival in England; Mrs. Fitzalbert thus appearing, in death, to doom her daughter to become a mourning bride. Mr. Montresor, with a considerate kindness, for which Ellen could almost have loved him, invited Mandeville, who had till this moment faithfully kept his promise of devoting himself to her family, to join him in his return to Athens; after which he intended to make a tour through the Turkish provinces.

Though little hoping to heal the wounds of a sick heart, Raymond accepted this well-meant proposal; while his more fortunate rival embarked for England in company with Ellen, in whom the deep sense of her recent loss appeared to have suspended and blunted, for a time, the impression of every other calamity.

CHAP. VIII.

Se'l miri fulminar nell' arme avvolto
Marte lo stimi: Amor se scopre il volto.
TASSO. *Gerusalemme Liberata.*

WE must suppose some years to have now elapsed since Alured parted from Leonora; a period during which a melancholy and important duty had devolved upon her. The wound which Lord Trelawney had received abroad, after depriving him of the sight of that eye, was the cause, in the course of time, of his losing the other. At the period of which we are now writing, he was totally blind; and found himself obliged, resigning at once the toils of public business, to seek, in the affectionate attentions of his family, the best resource against the dejection naturally induced by so heavy a misfortune.

In Mrs. Montresor, who regarded him with the love and reverence of a daughter; in the caresses of his grandchildren; but chiefly in the grateful attentions of the lovely Leonora, who, though sought by many, still remained unmarried, his lordship derived all the consolation of which his melancholy circumstances would admit. Though unable to read the letters addressed to him during this period by Chiaramonte, it is most probable, had their contents been communicated to Lord Trelawney in those moments when his mind was softened and subdued by recent calamity, he would have afforded them his favourable attention; but this was prevented by the interference of a person who, for a series of years, had exercised the greatest influence over him. This person suppressed the letters of Alured, as those of his mother, applying for forgiveness, had been, very many years before, suppressed. Of such a circumstance, a conversation

Alured had with Lord Trelawney gave him some suspicion; but of this more hereafter.

Lord Trelawney, however, was not to learn, that the Chiaramonte with whose society he had been so much delighted, was the once-neglected Alured. On his mentioning the circumstance, when first he returned to England, Colonel Montresor had, with equal pride and pleasure, explained to his lordship that Vere and Chiaramonte were the same, and was gratified to observe that the communication produced a most favourable effect on the mind of Lord Trelawney; but this, the subsequent conduct of Alured had done away. After keeping up, for some time, a regular correspondence with the young Count Chiaramonte, Colonel Montresor was surprised to find his letters unanswered. He wrote again, but with equal ill success. About this period the pressure of heavy domestic misfortunes prevented the Colonel from feeling

that lively interest in the concerns of his nephew which would have led him to make more particular enquiries. The public papers, from time to time, acquainted him that Vere was still in Sicily;—by degrees, those sources of intelligence no longer gave him any information on the subject; and, but for occasionally seeing his name in the lists of the army, the existence of Alured might have been forgotten by his family.

Time having, in a degree, alleviated the acute sense of his misfortune, Lord Trelawney no longer refused to enter into society, where the respectful deference with which he was treated contributed not a little to the restoration of his spirits; and often, from amidst the outward darkness that surrounded him, flashes of the versatile and creative mind, of the unconquerable soul of Trelawney, irradiated the gloom, and were gathered up by the attentive hearers with mingled interest, reverence, and wonder. The same irre-

sistible energy, the same penetrating sagacity that had distinguished his brightest days, still marked his conceptions, and dictated every observation he let fall. Applause was not damped now, as heretofore, by the malicious remark or invidious censure; envy itself no longer denied the praise of noble deeds and great intentions to the venerable and afflicted Trelawney; and his popularity was, perhaps, never so complete, as at the moment *that* popularity could avail him no more.

Whenever his lordship appeared in a fashionable circle, it was an object of emulation among rival belles *which* should be chosen the guide of his steps—which should have the honour of appearing the object of his preference and attention. For the credit of their humanity, we will hope that benevolence, uninfluenced by any more selfish consideration, prompted their conduct. But it must be acknowledged, few situations afforded

greater opportunity for displaying the charms of a fine woman to advantage than when, "moving in the light of her beauty," she sustained the enfeebled form of aged valour and worth, blighted still more by sorrow than by years. Seldom did a "fair and rounded arm" look lovelier than when lending its support to the benighted steps of the venerable warrior; seldom did a radiant eye beam brighter, than when imparting the assistance of sight to him whose orbs were quenched in darkness for ever.

So thought Lady Pierpoint, and Lady C——, and Lady E——, and Lady D——, and a hundred more *élégantes* titled and untitled of the very first *ton*;—and so acted, without having once indulged in similar speculations, the attached, the duteous Leonora. Nothing could be imagined more interesting than the appearance of those relatives together in public. The blooming Leonora's youthful and delicate, yet noble style of beauty, her graceful person, and

commanding height, formed the strongest contrast to the enfeebled but still striking figure of Trelawney,—the severe yet mournful expression of his time-furrowed countenance, which, no longer irradiated by the speaking indexes of the soul, conveyed, except when he was animated by the spirit of social intercourse, an impression of frowning and awful desolation.

"Will you venture to the platform this evening, my lord?" said Leonora; "indeed the seabreeze will do you good." It was but a few days since Lord Trelawney, being ordered sea-bathing by his physicians, had been attended to Southampton by his family; but he appeared, as yet, rather reluctant to encounter the crowd and bustle of a watering-place.

The earl having yielded to the winning instances of Leonora, the party proceeded to the platform, where they were soon joined by a gentleman, who

was never long in acquainting himself which way Miss Montresor directed her steps.

Major Molyneux as a very young man had known Colonel Montresor in India, where he had recommended himself to his notice by the excellence of his general character, and by several actions of the most brilliant and spirited gallantry. Returning home with a large fortune, acquired in a most rapid yet honourable manner, he eagerly sought a renewal of the acquaintance; and it may well be imagined that his intercourse with the Colonel was not rendered less agreeable by the addition of Leonora to the society. The heart of Major Molyneux surrendered, almost instantaneously, to her charms; though, to damp the vanity of young ladies in general, and of Miss Montresor in particular, it may not be amiss to add, that the gallant Major had at the time a strong *predisposition* to fall in love, having discovered that an ac-

complished and amiable wife was the only thing wanting to the completion of his happiness.

Major Molyneux was now Miss Montresor's constant shadow. His respectful attentions to Lord Trelawney endeared him to the affectionate Leonora; the variety of his deep and elegant information was such as she had never seen equalled in any other man, except her father; and, truly grateful to him for keeping off the crowd of impertinent flutterers that would have otherwise assailed her, Leonora's complexion brightened into a finer glow as he joined the party on the platform. The sun was setting upon the waters in softened majesty. Lord Trelawney, unable to enjoy the spectacle at which others were making exclamations of delight, seated himself on a bench, that he might taste, at least with greater perfection, the freshness and serenity of the hour. Leonora immediately sat down by him. She was joined

by Major Molyneux, in whom every action of her's excited increasing admiration. But was he the only one whose heart acknowledged her influence at that hour? No—there *was* one who, unheard, unseen by her, felt *his* heart tremble to the fascination she had, in a similar scene, exerted on him. Standing on the solitary beach, leaning against a withered tree, the wanderer, unnoticed by her, contemplated Leonora.

The stranger of distant regions, many a scar had marked his frame. Sorrow dwelt in his heart, but still his eye was erect and his spirit unsubdued.

He beheld Leonora with a start of surprise, and the most ardent feelings of reviving interest and admiration.

In Ireland, he had worshipped her as the aërial enchantress of the cliffs; in England, he had sung her as the poet's peerless Una: but never had Leonora appeared to him in such complete, such resistless beauty as now.

Lord Trelawney rose to leave the platform; Leonora advanced to give him her arm: the sea-blast rising, discomposed her veil, and gave her glittering tresses to the wind. It had heightened the glow of her complexion; her noble and striking profile, regular, and delicately roman, was turned a little from him, as she bent over the blind Trelawney with an air of exquisite solicitude and tenderness.

Alured contemplated the stern features of the aged warrior, but it was, now, with an emotion of secondary interest. In his fair supporter, he could have fancied he beheld Malvina, the white-armed daughter of Toscar, bending to listen to the tale of other days as it arose from the "voice of Cona."

A secret desire to approach the party impelled his steps unconsciously forward. He remembered a former period, when he had harboured a similar wish in such a scene; but Trelawney was *then* the

prevailing object of attraction. Colonel and Mrs. Montresor, with Major Molyneux, now joined the Earl and Leonora. "Why should I approach," Alured whispered, "they seem a happy group, and happiness has disowned me for ever." The sea-blast rose colder — the wanderer shrunk from its power: severe bodily sufferings — wounds harder to be endured than those received in battle — wounds inflicted by the murderous hand of treachery, reminded him of his imprudence in exposing himself to the thick coming dews of night: he sighed — shuddered — cast one more look towards the spot where his former friends stood; and, wrapping his military mantle close around him, retired.

"Of course you are for the review to-morrow, ladies," said Major Molyneux, gaily; and then, addressing himself in a more particular manner to Leonora, he said, he hoped she had fully determined to honour it with her presence, and to

persuade Mrs. Montresor to venture with her.

The troops that were to be reviewed, had been for some time assembling in the Isle of Wight, previous to their being sent upon foreign service. The review was to take place at a short distance from Southampton.

"Indeed you must go, Leonora," said Mrs. Montresor, "your spirits have not been high of late, and a little bustle will do them good."

This matter being settled, the following morning, which was a most glorious one, beheld the ladies, the one richly, the other elegantly attired, preparing to step into their barouche, which was to be driven by the Major. Their party was enlivened by a third lady, the Countess Von Lindenthal; better known to the reader as the wife of Baron Angelbreight, and Colonel Montresor's "sometime' ward. She had been, for a short time, Southampton, and having very few ac-

quaintances there, bestowed on Leonora the greater part of her time and attention. Her misfortune in losing Captain Angelbreight, though often alluded to, and related with great *vivacity* of grief, had neither damped her spirits nor checked her loquaciousness.

After a good deal of gay and lively chat upon the expected pleasures of the day, Lucinda suddenly exclaimed, addressing herself, in a lower voice, to Leonora, "Oh, my dear, how happy are you, whose thoughts are undivided by domestic anxieties, when you enter a scene like this! — How proud, yet how anxious I shall feel, when I see Lindenthal at the head of his men. Alas! if this projected expedition too should be fatal to me. — I have already told you," she continued in the same low whisper, "why I was induced to accept the hand of the Count. — You recollect, Captain Angelbreight, and Lieutenant Lindenthal were inseparable at Bath, —

well, my dear, abroad they were equally united. — He became Count Lindenthal about the time my dearest Angelbreight succeeded to the title of Baron; and Angelbreight's going into the Guards did not, in the least, affect their union. — In that last fatal engagement, Lindenthal received him in his arms — he was still able to express his wishes. — He said he should die in peace, if sure of consigning his Lucinda to protection so honourable as that of Captain Lindenthal. — Oh, my dear, what a situation for your Lucinda!" (Here she took out her white handkerchief and wept.) "Though firmly convinced that Angelbreight was the only man I ever could love, yet, rather than the dear creature should not die in peace, I solemnly promised (and you know how sacred I hold an engagement) that Lindenthal should receive my widowed hand. — We shortly after were ordered back to England, but now, alas, — I declare there he is—He will tell us where to place our-

selves — he sees me now — he has put his horse in a gallop — now he has stopped to speak to Rosenthal — they are reckoned a fine battalion — that's Rosenthal and De Cleves — I wish they would all join us."

Count Lindenthal (a martial and striking figure) approached the ladies. He said a few words, in a low voice, to Lucinda, which, as she had prophesied, produced the effect of removing the party to a more advantageous spot. Their communication was short; soon the brilliant business of the day began. Count Lindenthal and his gallant companions were lost in clouds of smoke, and even Lucinda's well-practised eye could scarcely create the semblance of his figure. Her attention was certainly much divided, and her exclamations of admiration of the scene before her were seconded by Mrs. Montresor, who was unfeignedly amused. Not so Leonora—an insuperable weight hung upon her spirits, and de-

prived her even of her usual calm cheerfulness.— The firing, the trampling of horses, the martial music that sounded from time to time, instead of producing a pleasing effect, agitated her with alternate terror and sadness.

" Do look, for Heaven's sake, — who can that most elegant creature be," exclaimed Lucinda, " he that is coming this way."

The officer belonged to a regiment of cavalry, distinguished by the horse-tail planted upon the glittering helmet, and which, waving with every wind, lent to each martial brow a romantic and terrible grace. He was, besides, remarkable for the ease with which he sat his horse,— the perfect security with which he seemed to command the movements of an animal which, for spirit and impetuosity, appeared indeed a creature composed of air and fire.

For a moment the stranger's face was turned towards the party in Mrs. Mon-

tresor's barouche. The black horse-tail, which floated above his helmet, was blown over his cheek by the wind; and, contrasting with the glowing richness of his complexion, imparted to the regular and classic beauty of his features and form, something of a foreign and oriental air — an expression that was at once wild, singular, and striking. Leonora had seen but one such countenance. "It is —" she whispered, "it must — oh God, can it be!" —— The bugle sounded—again the officer turned round to give the word: the deep, mellow tones of his manly and melodious voice thrilled to Leonora's heart. — As she eagerly caught them, his fiery charger, as if he had received a sudden bite or sting, began rearing in a most alarming manner — the graceful horseman alone seemed not disturbed. "Oh, Heavens, he will never master it! —'tis Count Alured—he will be thrown," exclaimed the Countess of Lindenthal.—

The curvetting steed proved more and more unmanageable — the ladies bent forward from the carriage in breathless anxiety—Leonora started up, and involuntarily clasped her hands together. The officer was thrown with violence from his seat; and the animal, that but a moment before he had appeared to govern with such graceful negligence, as if wild with recovered liberty, struck him a blow near the temple which left him to all appearance lifeless. Leonora urged Mrs. Montresor to make enquiries about him. Pale and breathless she repeated her conviction that the man who had presented himself thus unexpectedly to her eyes was her long-lost relative. Two of Mrs. Montresor's people were dispatched to administer any assistance that might be required, and to bring her intelligence whether the accident was, indeed, a fatal one. The account brought back was, that the officer was speechless — that his friends were con-

veying him to a farm-house in the neighbourhood — and that, till after that was done, nothing could be known respecting his possible chance of recovery. They confirmed, also, the assertion of Leonora and Lucinda — the person about whom the ladies had been so humanely interested was indeed Alured Vere.

CHAP. IX.

Que deux cœurs sont près l'un de l'autre quand il n'y a aucun vice entre eux!

Maximes Chinoises.

THE information that Alured was the sufferer, conveyed different emotions among the different branches of Colonel Montresor's family. They all concurred, however, in a lively sympathy, and in determining to afford him every assistance and attention in their power. His wound, which at first bore such a frightful appearance, was found not to be dangerous; and though for many days confined to his couch, his spirits were, during that interval, cheered by the kind and affectionate messages that were perpetually passing between him and his long-estranged relatives.

As soon as it was possible for him to be removed, Alured was eager to pay his personal acknowledgments for their kindness. He found Major Molyneux in addition to the domestic circle; and, with the quick instinct of revived partiality, fancied the major appeared upon the footing of one who was soon to be considered as a member of the family. His presence was, however, useful, as preventing all embarrassing retrospections. The reception Alured met with from Lord Trelawney, at once set him at ease. Taught by misfortune to value the support of every branch of his family, the earl seemed to have made a truce with his former prejudices, and to wish to be on terms of amity with all. Still his late behaviour, his total silence and neglect of his English relatives, prevented those effusions of affectionate admiration which his gallant and spirited conduct, during the short time he served under Lord Trelawney's command, would have other-

wise called forth. The Colonel was kind, but serious; and Alured thought he perceived on the formerly open and cheerful countenance of Mrs. Montresor, an anxious and care-worn expression, that had anticipated the progress of years. He looked round for his former playfellows. Rosabella was grown a fine girl; but Frederic he did not see. Leonora took an opportunity to approach him. "Don't ask for my poor brother Frederic," she whispered. She would have added more, but tears filled her eyes.— While Alured meditated upon this injunction, and the various changes a few years create, Major Molyneux looked over at them with the jealous air of one who has a right to demand the subject of a conversation. Alured envied him the privilege of giving such a look, but determined to watch a little longer before he formed a conclusive opinion. Though he had not kept his room above a fortnight, the alteration in his appear-

ance was such as to shock the eye of affection. He still occasionally suffered from the consequences of the dastardly attack made upon him at Palermo; and another wound that he had since received in battle, and that had almost by miracle escaped the lungs, caused him moments of severe agony, and often rendered fire peculiarly distressing to him. Observing that, as he sat near it, to converse with Lord Trelawney, his hand was occasionally applied to his side, while an expression of repressed but intense suffering passed over his still interesting countenance, Leonora, without speaking, rose and placed a screen, so as to conceal the fire from him, without incommoding the venerable Earl. Alured felt more touched by this simple action, than by the relief it afforded him. Still the *motive* was every thing.—"Is this remembrance, or mere humanity?"—Alured had scarcely asked himself the question, when his eyes met those of

Leonora. In them he read the answer; and, in an instant, their hearts were disclosed to each other!

With spirits considerably lightened, he called the next day at "the cottage," for so, in compliance with modern custom, was termed a handsome and commodious house Lord Trelawney had taken for the season. His satisfaction was not diminished by the absence of Major Molyneux; while a long and confidential conversation that he had with his lovely cousin, who was the only person visible at the time of his arrival, informed him of the revolutions that had taken place in her family since last they met.— The Colonel, considerably inconvenienced by the extravagance of Lord Marston, was seriously thinking of giving up Leolin Abbey for a time, and letting it to some eligible tenant, when a fire, that broke out in some of the offices, communicated itself with inconceivable rapidity to the building, and destroyed the greater

part of it, before the united efforts of the tenants and neighbours could get it under.

Perceiving that Leonora turned pale in this part of her narrative, Alured feigned himself eager to begin the relation of his own adventures, in order to spare her the pain of more minutely recounting what had befallen her family. Miss Montresor observed his delicate kindness, but would not avail herself of it.—"Do not think me so weak," said she, "as not to be able steadily to contemplate calamities, however grievous: it is not the devastation—it is not the injury to my own prospects that I lament—but my Frederic!—my dear, affectionate, kind-hearted mother!"—

"She lost him, then?" interrupted Alured, with emotion.

"He was suffocated, before assistance could be procured to convey him out of the nursery window!"

Alured clasped his hands upon his forehead—he feared, by the expression

of his feelings, to agitate Leonora. He had passionately loved that child, whose innocent gaiety had beguiled many a listless, and many a painful hour.

" Since that period, my father has been a wanderer," Leonora resumed: " he cannot banish from his mind the remembrance of his loss; and has with difficulty been prevailed on to allow my brother Ernest to remain so long abroad. Sometimes he talks of rebuilding the Abbey, at least of rendering some part of it habitable. He was always a little of an architect," she continued, with a forced smile, " but though the drawing-room is generally littered with plans, he seldom proceeds farther than to ask our opinion respecting the different merits of the Gothic and the Grecian; — In fact, his fortune is now by no means equal to the expense of such an undertaking."

When Alured, in turn, began his narrative, Miss Montresor soon perceived,

with equal surprise and pleasure, that, whatever he had to complain of from the injustice of others, he could completely exculpate himself from the errors imputed to him.——A painful scene the wanderer had to paint — a distracted court—an exiled queen—but, above all, the triumph of the most cruel and complicated treachery with which the demons of ambition and vengeance ever inspired the heart of erring man.

Struck with Alured's story, Prince Felipe Gaudiano, from the moment the Baroness Lucinda communicated it to him, marked him for his prey. His family name and arms were the same as those of the house of Chiaramonte, though no relationship had ever been proved between his own and the Neapolitan family; but, on seeing a stranger in possession of the titles and honours, he resolved, if possible, to deprive him of them.

Another cause stimulated the jealousy of the vengeful Italian — he believed

Alured to be more favoured than himself by Ellen Fitzalbert; and this idea, though so completely ill-founded, furnished an additional motive for hatred of the unoffending stranger. Under his directions the attempt was made at the Porta Felice, which had nearly proved fatal to the life of Vere. Disappointed by his subsequent recovery, Prince Felipe had recourse to surer means of ruining him. He instituted a suit, as asserting a nearer claim than Vere to the title of Chiaramonte.

Though it was well known that he had never set up the smallest pretensions to the succession till Alured's appearance — that the late Count had never acknowledged him as a relation — and that his claims of affinity, if any such existed, were the most uncertain and remote, there were not wanting advocates who, supported by the royal countenance, urged the cause of the Sicilian Prince, and with success, against a

stranger, of a different country and religion from their own. Alured's profession, too, which occasioned his frequent removal, during this period, from the seat of government to different parts of the island, prevented his attending to his own interests as he would otherwise have done. Forged parchments were produced by his adversaries. By the most shameful chicanery and breach of faith, the cause was, at length, decided against him, and the Most Serene Prince Felipe Gaudiano declared the rightful successor to the honours of Montalbano and Chiaramonte. His Messenian villa was the only property of which Alured was not by law deprived.

Scarcely was this disagreeable business brought to a conclusion, when Alured was sent out upon an expedition against Murat, which failed, and he was, along with many others, taken prisoner. The revolutionary King of Naples knew too

well the value of his captive to let him escape upon easy terms; he retained him a considerable time under different pretences: and it was at length owing to the fidelity and address of his favourite servant Bailey, that Alured, who was on no parole, was enabled, after many difficulties, to effect his escape and rejoin his regiment, then under orders for England.

Scarce landed, he learnt it was in contemplation to send them out upon a new service; and he was this time only prevented accompanying them on their destination by the accident related in the last chapter, an accident which he was yet ignorant whether he ought to consider as a fortunate or unfortunate event in his life.

When he had concluded, "Believe me," said Leonora, with emotion, "I am grateful to you for the pain you have voluntarily encountered to gratify me with your eventful and singular history. It may be owing to my English preju-

dice, but I confess I can scarcely regret not being obliged to address you by that strange foreign title—it seemed made but to separate us—you were no longer our own Alured from that moment."

"Our own Alured!"—The Sicilian wanderer felt an unwonted glow at this expression. The colour deepened on his cheek, and he found Leonora's work-box very useful, as he apparently employed himself in examining the design upon the lid, to conceal certain long-forgotten emotions that had once been fondly cherished.

Leonora seemed embarrassed too. "What *am* I to call you now?" she at length exclaimed, with an earnestness that had almost a ludicrous effect when opposed to the comparative unimportance of the question.

"They could not deprive me of the order of St. Ferdinand; and it has been confirmed by the King of England," replied Sir Alured Vere: "it is all I

have to boast of in consequence of my services in the cause of their Sicilian Majesties," he continued, with a forced smile; " while the injuries they have done me —— But we won't talk of injuries — I have still my profession, and, from my estate at Messina, now there are no farther claims upon it, I shall draw a comfortable independence. The monk Orazio justly told me to fear an enemy at Palermo. He had been tutor in the family of Prince Felipe — was aware of his unprincipled ambition, and the manner in which he would probably act towards me whenever I was obtruded upon his notice."

The entrance of Lord Trelawney put an end to a conversation that had been most interesting to Leonora. Discretion induced her immediately to retire, in order to allow liberty for a more full explanation between relatives who had so long entertained an unhappy prejudice against each other.

Alured now remembered the mysterious expressions Lord Trelawney had dropped in that singular conference he had with him upon the affairs of his family, and, resolving to elucidate that circumstance, led the conversation to the subject of his mother. After painting, in eloquent terms, her submission and repentance, he enumerated the letters she had written, the attempts she had made in vain to obtain her father's pardon.

While Alured was speaking, the idea that he was near the term of his wishes, the anxiety to vindicate a beloved parent's memory, supported him, and gave enthusiasm to his expressions; but, had he anticipated the effect they would produce, he would probably have delayed, or managed with more art, this delicate explanation. As he spoke, the sightless countenance of the venerable Trelawney gradually assumed an expression of horror, his voice became broken and

interrupted, and he was only able to exclaim, " Oh, my poor injured child! never did I receive those letters—Charles indeed represented her as penitent, but —" he paused, while strong emotions appeared to shake his frame, then added, in an inward voice, " there must be somewhere the most abominable treachery."

A little time before, Alured would have believed himself most fortunate in pressing upon Lord Trelawney's mind the conviction of his mother's innocence; but now, when he saw the agonies of remorse and uncertainty which bent that venerable brow, which shook that enfeebled frame, he almost repented having started the subject, and determined not, for some time, to renew it.

Mrs. Montresor being rather indisposed, the family spent the evening at home—as usual, Major Molyneux formed one of the party: the other additions were, Alured and the Countess Von

Lindenthal, with her two lovely children, Albertine and Henry. Albertine was old enough to be very interesting and amusing, and had already been taught, with success, to transfer the appellation of "papa" from Baron Angelbreight to Count Lindenthal.

Like all those who possess her sweet and amiable disposition, Leonora was uncommonly fond of children; she occupied herself this evening more than usual with those of her friend—perhaps to conceal that her thoughts were principally employed upon one who was not a child.

"Are they not delightful little creatures?" she exclaimed to Major Molyneux, after having been busily employed in telling Albertine a long story.

"Delightful! Now let us have a truce of Harry and Albertine," replied the Major, in a tone between playfulness and pique.

"I declare he is jealous of those

children," exclaimed Leonora, laughing; "Garrick was said to be jealous of Punch, and Major Molyneux is equally so of my little fascinating Albertine."

"You may rally," he answered, in a lower tone, "if it be a fault, 'tis one interwoven in my nature—one of which I can no more divest myself, than of any other quality that properly belongs to me. — Yes, were I your happy lover," he continued, in a passionate whisper, "I should be jealous of your friend Lucinda —of your employments — your music —your drawing. — I could not bear you should possess so many means of happiness independent of me: but above all, I should be jealous of that child—jealous of the enthusiasm with which you often speak of her rising abilities — of her beauty. If I had the power, I believe I should change places with Albertine, and consent to be a child for ever, to be thus rapturously praised by Miss Montresor."

Alured lost not a word of this rhapsody. "Jealous!" he indignantly repeated to himself. "What right has *he* to be jealous?" But relentless conscience almost immediately suggested, "Alas! what right have *you?*"

In his various reverses of fortune, Alured had never neglected to cultivate the Muse — she was his delight in the intervals afforded by the hurry of an active life, his solace under the horrors of a languishing captivity. During his long and rigorous confinement in an Italian fortress, the history and revolutions of that country in which he was an unwilling resident, had naturally occupied a portion of his thoughts.

Two tragedies, founded on the stories of Fiesco and Rienzi, "the last of the Romans," were the result of the unwelcome leisure that had been accorded to him.

The Colonel, who was an enthusiast in polite literature, was delighted with them.

"This is beyond all I ever believed of you," he said; "the versification of Metastasio, united to the force of Alfieri.'

"I understand you," replied Alured, smiling; "surrounded by severe and classic models, I rather imitated the Italian simplicity of fable, than the complicated plot, and showy decoration, of our own stage."

"Yes," observed Lord Trelawney, to whom the two dramas had been read, "they have merit, but they wouldn't do in England — they would not do."

Alured comprehended, at once, the intention of the earl — that he did justice to his grandson's genius, but wished it to be turned into a different channel.

"Now we talk of theatricals," observed Leonora, "I must present myself as an humble suitor to your lordship in behalf of the *Corps Dramatique* of this very town. —Mr. Kelly, the manager, has been with me to entreat my interest with your lordship to bespeak a play; it

will make them quite the fashion, and bring all the Admirals and Admirals' wives within ten miles of us to fill the boxes."

"With all my heart," replied the good-humoured veteran, "and you, Leonora, shall, in reality, have the right to name the piece."

The arrangements were accordingly made, and the party formed; the play commanded was Tamerlane.

CHAP. X.

It shall be my delight to tend his eyes,
And view him sitting in the house, ennobled
With all those high exploits by him achiev'd.
MILTON.

APPEARING in his box, supported, on the one side, by Sir Alured Vere, on the other by the lovely Leonora, the entrance of the Earl of Trelawney was greeted by an involuntary and unanimous burst of applause. He bowed repeatedly in return, and, in the performance of this graceful action, his mild and dignified deportment, his appearance, at once venerable and melancholy in the extreme, called forth universal sympathy and interest.

Though enjoying the homage paid to his distinguished relative, Alured tasted

a still livelier pleasure in contemplating unobserved, the winning graces, the patient sweetness of Leonora — her perfect inattention to the admiration she inspired in all around, and her anxiety to make the time pass agreeably to Lord Trelawney. As each performer came on, she described to him, in a low tone, their appearance and costume; mentioned the acquaintances that she discovered in the house; and, in short, omitted nothing to make the earl as *present* to the passing scene as she was herself. Alured could scarcely obtain a word from her; but how he loved this graceful neglect — this praiseworthy forgetfulness!

Her attempts were not unsuccessful — Lord Trelawney was really amused. Two capital performers, whom, in former days, he had often seen in London, were engaged; and their appearance he could easily figure to himself: the rest, he judged by Leonora's patient and accurate descriptions.

"I see," he observed, applying that affecting expression so often employed by the blind to designate a sense they have lost, "Mrs. M—— is unusually splendid to-night — but why have they bestowed so little care on Bajazet's imperial trappings! — How is K—— drest?—Will he soon come on? — I see the house is very crowded!"

All eyes were attracted to their box. The tall, emaciated figure of Lord Trelawney — his eyes covered with a green ribband, but his voice and gestures still expressing intelligence and cheerfulness, while bending, in pleased attention, he listened to Leonora — the striking, and somewhat foreign appearance of Alured, and the exquisite beauty of Miss Montresor, formed, altogether, such a group as could not be contemplated without interest.

Though recovered from the immediate effects of his accident, Alured's health was far from being re-established; and, as his going abroad was at present out

of the question, all his friends united in earnestly advising him to remain in a scene at once so pleasant and salubrious. Every day he gained ground with Lord Trelawney. In Alured's affectionate attentions, his lordship found all the pleasure he used to experience from those of Colonel Montresor. At length, he would only accept those invitations in which Vere was included, and seemed incapable of enjoying any degree of comfort but when conscious of the presence of his grandson. In every company, this amiable young man was the constant attendant upon the steps of Lord Trelawney; resolutely rejecting every temptation of pleasure and amusement that might interfere with the duty he owed his unhappy and noble relative; a circumstance which added to the interest the story of Alured's singular adventures, the knowledge of his genius, and misfortunes, was beginning to excite in every circle. This was still

further increased by the easy confidence, the graceful self-possession, of Vere, whose former spirit seemed nothing damped by the reverses he had experienced. On the contrary, he felt that, with the ladies at least, they shed a romantic and chivalrous lustre over his character, equivalent to any advantage it could have derived from the steady gilding of prosperity and success.

A man of talents and amiable qualities, whether he is remarkably the favourite of fortune, or has met with singular calamities, has almost an equal chance of being viewed with partiality by the fair.

Extremes are always interesting to the fancy.—The palace or the cottage — the king or the beggar—youth or age — wisdom or madness — heroic virtue or appalling vice; these are the subjects that furnish the most favourite studies, the most advantageous combinations, for the poet; the painter, or romance writer:

while, on that golden mean in fortune, talent, and situation, that mediocrity which the wisest have pronounced to be the fit soil for the cultivation of reason, virtue, and happiness, Imagination, scarcely deigns to glance her eagle eye.

The same cause rendered Leonora's entire devotion of herself to form the comfort and society of Lord Trelawney, when contrasted with her blooming youth and beauty, singularly attractive and interesting. Like another illustrious character of modern date, the earl often styled her *his* Antigone, and added, in an accent of affection, "Well may I adopt the consolation of Delille, on being deprived, like me, of the blessing of sight: "*Eh bien! je dépendrai un peu plus de ceux que j'aime.*" But I am of a less gentle nature than a French poet, I suppose," his lordship continued, in a sprightlier tone, "and have still something of an English spirit of independ-

ence about me, that would prefer giving, to receiving assistance."

"I think," replied Leonora, "the opposite merits of the French and English characters were never brought out in more forcible contrast than in the anecdote you allude to, my lord, and one that is related of Milton, suffering under similar circumstances. — When unable to continue his literary labours, the habitual philosophy, the spirit of contentment mingled with sensibility of the elegant and tender Delille, broke forth in the affecting expression "*Je dépendrai un peu plus de ceux que j'aime.*" When told that, if he went on with his "Defence of the People of England," he would infallibly lose his sight, the lofty enthusiasm, the elevated determination of Milton's sterner character, dictated the reply "that he had no choice between his Eyesight and his Duty."

As she concluded, Leonora looked timidly towards Alured, and blushed—

she had hardly ever ventured to speak so long before. Entertaining, in common with many men of genius, ideas rather too circumscribed with respect to the proper use and exercise of the powers of the female mind, he could, yet, find nothing to reprove in the filial piety, the amiable tenderness, that dictated Leonora's remarks. He smiled approval on her, and Alured's approving smile was now her best reward. What a pity, that the luxuries should so soon become the necessaries of life!

Already had Leonora begun to prefer looking and listening to him beyond any pleasure, any amusement that could be offered to her. The conversation of Alured was indeed singularly attractive; in it might be traced the vigorous judgment, and keen, polished wit of Trelawney, mingled with a playfulness, a sportive and enchanting gaiety, peculiar to himself. Italian suns seemed to have ripened the rich fruits of his imagination to a

beauty and flavour undreamt of, in our colder clime. Often, when a circle had gradually formed around him, attracted by those bright beams of wit, which played, without diminution of lustre, and almost without intermission, flash after flash, upon the dazzled sense and enchanted ear, Leonora, enjoying the most delightful pleasure a mind of sensibility can experience, the contemplation of the merit and success of an object beloved, felt her bosom throbbing with emotion, her eyes suffused with tears, in a scene where others breathed only gaiety and ease.

Numerous and varied were her enjoyments in his society during the parties they formed to the Isle of Wight and Netley Abbey, or their excursions in the delightful environs of Southampton; scenes which, in common with other parts of Hampshire, certainly suggested Charlotte Smith's pleasing and accurate description.

Wound round the hedge-row's oaken boughs,
The woodbine's tassels float in air.
And, blushing, the uncultured rose
Hangs high her beauteous blossoms there.

Whether the mild beauties of cultivated nature, or the awful ruins of ancient art, attracted their attention, still, in every scene Leonora found herself guided by the judgment of her companion, and enlightened by his taste.

Time had produced a change in the manners, as well as the mind of Alured, but it was a change of the most advantageous description. He was no longer the lively, indiscreet, impetuous boy—quickly offended, easily charmed, the slave, by turns, of prejudice and passion. Having mixed much abroad with the gay, the busy, and the great, and being convinced, by experience, that the world — the cold and cruel world — extends its indulgence more freely to any crime than that of acknowledged and convicted enthusiasm, he now, when in general

society, carefully repressed the mingled flame of ambition and genius which still so intensely glowed in his heart, beneath a surface graceful, indeed, and attractive, but cold as it was polished and bright. Yet even in such moments, the passing language of a smile — a smile soft, fugitive, and mysterious, the most expressive that ever played upon a human countenance, revealed to the kindred spirit, that no sally disclosing the beauty of the soul, no trait that indicated either sensibility or genius, was overlooked by him in the vivacity of conversation, or was heard without acknowledgment and applause.

Still, it was in the quiet of domestic privacy, or perhaps in the intercourse of soul and thought with only Leonora, that was Alured's moment of power — that he was dangerous as delightful. — Then, the beautiful picture of his mind was disclosed, without veil or shadow, to the eye of partial friendship. And as,

giving the reins to his excursive fancy, he allowed the variety of its harmonious combinations, the splendour of its magnificent conceptions, to pass in rapid review before her, she hung on his accents with a delight too vivid to be lasting — too transporting to be safe.

Sometimes, she contemplated with surprise, the first elements of those beautiful creations, which, when perfect, were sure to delight an admiring world : sometimes, with a voice attuned to harmony, he repeated to her passages of his enchanting poetry, not yet confided to any ear but hers. In these conversations Leonora found her judgment strengthened, her taste expanded, and her imagination cultivated to the utmost extent. It is a common remark, that a woman may acquire almost any talent from the man she loves. Let the pursuit even be dry or abstruse, it suffices that *he* should be engaged in it, to induce her voluntarily to acquaint herself with its details, to

take an interest in its progress — nay, to find her powers of attention improved, her memory strengthened, her mind endued with new faculties to admire and comprehend him. It may be imagined, then, what a docile scholar Leonora proved, when the subject, so far from being unpleasing or repulsive, related to the most fascinating pursuit, the most enchanting art, that ever was bestowed for the relief and solace of suffering humanity.

But it was not always that Alured's mind was in a state to admit the sweet illusions of fancy — stern realities often pressed upon it with recollection's sudden pang; and then, his spirits were subject to vicissitudes of the most cruel depression. Yet, was the pity he, at such times, inspired, less dangerous than admiration, to Leonora? When, after a silence of some time, he turned those soft eyes on her's, and seemed to mourn his hopes destroyed—opportunities wasted

—and youth dissolved away in a gay, soft, idle dream—in pleasing, profitless delusions,—then, then she felt the overwhelming tides of painful, powerless pity oppress and enervate her soul—'twas then she sighed to think of her own inability to relieve or console him; till compassion for his unmerited misfortunes gradually changed and expanded into admiration of his distinguished deserts.

CHAP. XI.

For contemplation he, and valour formed,
For softness she, and sweet attractive grace.
MILTON. *Paradise Lost.*

THE continued silence of Alured gave pain to the ingenuous and tender Leonora. 'Tis true, his lately acquired fortune was diminished; but still, enough remained to prevent his apprehending the rejection of his suit from a man so disinterested as Colonel Montresor. Now time had developed the character of each, she could not forbear flattering herself they were peculiarly suited to each other. *She* possessed exactly those qualities which nature had omitted in composing *his* marked and spirited character; while the various and uncommon talents he possessed would be a perpetual source of improvement and delight to Leonora.

Could the partial overthrow of his ambitious hopes lead him to think himself unworthy of her?—It was even so. At a time when he might, according to his own ideas, have honourably pretended to her hand, vanity, ambition, and, above all, the interesting and romantic pursuit he was engaged in respecting Lord Trelawney, had contributed to turn his attention from her. The attractions of Leonora had faded on his memory, and he knew not the power they were to resume over him the moment he was restored to their influence. He now beheld in Major Molyneux a rival, who probably possessed advantages over him in the eyes of both her parents; and he was determined that no indiscretion of his should turn the innocent Leonora from the path of prudence and duty.

The arrival of the Miss Newboroughs at Southampton promised to change the course of Leonora's ideas for the present. These young ladies immediately com-

menced, or rather resumed, a violent friendship with the Countess Von Lindenthal, and there were few days that they did not spend part of their time with Leonora, urging her to partake of various amusements, or relating those they had themselves enjoyed.

The renewed correspondence of Ernest Montresor and Constantia Newborough, which had now for a considerable period subsisted uninterruptedly, was to be traced in her amended looks and spirits. *Miss* Newborough was, also, in high good-humour with herself, having succeeded in captivating the affections of Lucinda's rejected swain, Sir Geoffry Prenderghast; while Aurelia was so busy, planning finery for the approaching wedding of her sister, that she had hardly leisure to deplore the bad taste of her beaux in allowing her still to sigh unsuited.

During the time of the Newboroughs' stay at Southampton, Leonora had the

pleasure of communicating to Constantia a letter from Ernest, announcing his immediate return. The letter was dated from Constantinople; but he expressed his intention of setting out a few days after he dispatched it.

Little suspecting how much she was originally indebted to Miss Fitzalbert for the favourable turn in her affairs, Constantia embraced her lovely "sister," as she already, by anticipation, termed Leonora; declaring, while she shed a torrent of tears on her bosom, she felt so happy, that her only drawback was a trembling apprehension of the reality or duration of such felicity.

Leonora was incapable of envy; but a soft sigh, so gentle that it would scarcely have disturbed a sleeping sylph upon a rose-leaf, betrayed, after Constantia's departure, that all was not as much at peace in her own bosom as in her friend's.

At this moment Alured entered the

room. " I have been thinking all the morning," he said, " of that poem I showed you yesterday.—I believe, after all, I must leave out the episode."

" You were!" thought Leonora; " all the morning — and all the morning what was *I* thinking of? — You! Oh, truly, says the eloquent Corinne, " *Un homme a toujours quelque projet, quelque affaire, dans sa têtc ; une femme est toute entière à son amour !*" To conceal the passing emotion, she reverted to the affairs of her brother and Miss Newborough.

" Happy Constantia!" exclaimed Alured; " your brother, too, is happy — " Here he paused; but his looks too plainly showed the mental comparison he had made.

" Are those your real sentiments?" said Leonora. " Now, by this amaranth, which I have preserved, as fresh as the first moment it was gathered, I believed you devoted to the pursuit of fame and praise as much as when you first presented it to me."

"Oh, Leonora! that was a thoughtless moment — young, proud, presumptuous, the world appeared to me like one vast, brilliant garden, where honours and pleasures offered themselves on every side. Love seemed, then, but as a point in the boundless universe of happiness, I contemplated as within my grasp — But now it is reversed. Love appears the centre from which all human happiness is derived, and other objects as so many accessories, that may enhance, but cannot constitute felicity."

Observing that Leonora listened to him with an emotion, such as she had never before discovered, Alured felt that he had betrayed himself, and all that now remained for him was to disclaim any presumptuous hopes arising from the sentiments he involuntarily cherished. After an agitated pause, "Forgive me," he resumed, "if I have, unintentionally, disclosed feelings I intended for ever to confine within my own

bosom.—Too well I know you are entitled to a much higher, happier choice, but —"

"You must not thus undervalue yourself," exclaimed Leonora, interrupting him with generous delicacy. "Unauthorised to speak, I feel alike apprehensive of doing wrong, whether I reply to you or am silent. I dread to be lessened in your esteem. But do not — oh! do not think me ungrateful."

She hid her blushing face in her handkerchief, and hastily quitted the room, leaving her lover in a confusion of feelings, in which pleasure was, undoubtedly, the one that predominated.

As she entered Mrs. Montresor's dressing room, the paleness which overspread her features, and which had succeeded to their late transient glow was such, it was impossible for that lady, unobserving as she usually was, not to be struck with it.

"What is the matter, my love?" she said, half raising herself from the sofa

on which she had been reposing; "has any thing frightened you, or are you tired with walking? Whatever it is, you had better follow my example, and try to go to sleep."

Mrs. Montresor pointed to the other sofa as she gave this consolatory advice, and seemed to be herself preparing to set the example of what she recommended; but, directing a second look towards Leonora's agitated countenance, which exhibited the picture, in her so rare, of painful and contending passions, Mrs. Montresor's indolence, which was great, gave way to her good-nature, which was greater, and affectionately taking the hand of her step-daughter, she kindly enquired into the nature of her emotion, and soon drew from the ingenuous Leonora a confession of the whole.

Blest at a late period of life in union of affection herself, Mrs. Montresor listened with benignant indulgence to a history of the doubts and fears of love. She condemned Alured's scruples, and at length

so far reassured the timid Leonora, as to lead her to contemplate, without fear, the prospect of having the circumstance submitted to her father.

"I knew how it would be," observed Mrs. Montresor, "from the moment Alured returned. He could not avoid admiring my Leonora — Oh, my dear, it is when people meet again after a long absence the object of their first impressions, that their constancy is put to the proof."

Love and fortune seemed now once more to smile upon Alured. Obviously encouraged to hope both by the manner of Leonora and Mrs. Montresor, it was not for a lover and a poet any farther to resist the flattering prospects that opened to his view. Already he began to yield to their delightful influence, when compelled at once abruptly to abandon his new-formed hopes, by a change of opinion in the rulers of the family, originating in a domestic occurrence of the most unexpected and tragical description.

CHAP. XII.

Œnone. — Ils ne se verront plus —
Phédre. — Ils s'aimeront toujours !
RACINE. *Phédre.*

On the following day, Colonel Montresor received a packet from abroad; and, as such were always the first to be eagerly opened, he hastened to communicate the contents to his family. After glancing his eye over the first lines, his countenance assumed an expression of anxiety, which soon deepened into one of anguish and horror; and handing the letter, in silence, to Mrs. Montresor, he abruptly quitted the room.

The letter was from Captain Mandeville, who, it may be remembered, had accompanied Ernest Montresor in a tour through Greece and other parts of the

Turkish empire. It announced the untimely fate of poor Ernest, as he was preparing to return to the bosom of his family.

Montresor, who had always a fondness for distinguishing himself by any uncommon enterprise, had, unfortunately, engaged, for a wager, with a young Greek, to swim across the Hellespont. This his companion, who was an excellent swimmer, and accustomed to the exercise, accomplished; but Montresor was seized with a faintness while yet at some distance from the opposite shore, and, before any assistance could be procured for him, sunk, the victim of his self-confidence and temerity. The packet Mandeville transmitted contained many more particulars; but nothing further could be attended to at this moment of family affliction.

The grief of Leonora, who had fondly loved her brother, and joyfully antici-

pated the moment of reunion, was poignant and sincere. Divided between the natural indulgence of it, and the task of soothing poor Constantia, whose anguish approached nearly to distraction, it was not till after a considerable time that she was made to feel how much it bore on her own more immediate prospects of happiness.

The first that recovered from the severity of this "tempest shock" was the unconquerable mind of Trelawney; but he seemed to date, from that period, a new series of feelings and opinions.

Both Colonel Montresor's sons being dead, and Lord Marston continuing childless, his thoughts wholly reverted to the offspring of Emmeline Vere; —to Alured, who might, at no very distant period, be the only inheritor of those honours which he had once fondly hoped would cover the numerous branches of a blooming and flourishing tree.

He now frequently revolved in his mind, plans of his grandson's future destination. Sometimes he spoke as if he wished to place him in the diplomatic line; sometimes, as if he thought his talents more peculiarly adapted to the senate. In this last idea Lord Trelawney was much strengthened by a letter he, about that time, received, announcing the dangerous illness and probable demise of one of the representatives of a borough that acknowledged his influence. He seemed to regret the circumstance of Alured's being still in the army; and often considered how most speedily to withdraw him from that profession with honour. Whatever might be his lordship's other projects, he expressed, on the subject being hinted to him, the most vehement disapprobation of the idea of a union between his grandchildren. "The branches of our tree are daily lopped," he said: "we must take care the few that remain shall

flourish. — United, Alured and Leonora could only impede each other's fortune; separately, they each have merit sufficient to strengthen, by alliances, the consequence of a family that misfortune, malice, the wickedness of men, and the dispensations of Heaven, seem to join in pulling down almost as soon as it is raised."

In his family, Trelawney possessed an influence that was resistless; from his earliest youth, Colonel Montresor had been accustomed to yield to it: it was not to be expected that he would brave it for the sake of another. To his father's will he had once given up his own prospects of happiness; he was now prepared to exact from his daughter a similar sacrifice.

Alured saw the fiat of one man opposing an insurmountable barrier to his opening prospects; and this man was Trelawney! In the moment that the earl expressed the highest opinion of

him, *that* opinion tended rather to confirm than reverse the decree he had pronounced. This was the end of Alured's air-drawn visions. For years he had been engaged in an illusory and unprofitable pursuit; a pursuit which had suspended all his other faculties, and even rendered the possession of more tranquil blessings tasteless. He had, at length, accomplished his aim—his merits were acknowledged; he was in full possession of the esteem, the confidence, the favour of Trelawney. Was he the happier?—The enthusiastic votary of fancy, it was seldom that he, voluntarily, held up the steady light of reason for his guide; but sometimes Experience rudely flashed it in his eyes, and then he felt more startled and offended, than grateful for the blaze.

Already had Major Molyneux, on his declaring himself, been rejected as not coming up to the high views Lord Trelawney now indulged for Leonora. His

lordship announced his own speedy departure for London, in order to present Alured to the minister, who was his particular friend.

Colonel Montresor's health, already injured by affliction, was so much shaken by this domestic calamity, that he was advised by his physicians not to venture into the bustle of a town-life for some months at least; and Leonora gladly acquiesced in a plan of temporary retirement, so suited, in every respect, to the present state of her feelings.

Before Alured's departure, an interview with Leonora was secured to him by the sympathising kindness of Mrs. Montresor, in which he received every consolation that the most solemn and reiterated assurances of Leonora's fidelity could give him.

Mrs. Montresor herself suggested the reasonableness of hope. "Lord Trelawney, though absolute, is not immortal," she said, "and so my friend

Alured indulges in no new poetical vagaries, but continues true to his "peerless Una," as he used to call her—"

"Continues true!" repeated Alured, indignantly; but a smile, full of confidence, from Leonora, repaid him for the temporary pain this implied doubt had given him.

In order to lessen the tediousness of absence, it was agreed that Leonora and Alured should, on each side, keep a journal, to be transmitted weekly; thus preserving that interest in each other's thoughts and pursuits, which is the surest safeguard of affection.

Perhaps the conduct of Mrs. Montresor may not appear, on this occasion, in a light the most favourable to her prudence; but it must be observed, in her excuse, that the goodness of her heart too often misled her judgment, which was never very strong; and her few ideas, when she *did* indulge in reflection, had all received a romantic bias

from the circumstances in which she herself had, in early life, been placed.

When Lord Trelawney and his grandson had departed, Leonora continued, for some time, weeping on the bosom of Mrs. Montresor. "Do not check me," she said, "my invaluable friend: this indulgence does me good, and you will have no reason to repent having accorded it to me."

Leonora was mindful of her promise. Her tears were soon dried up: indeed, the consciousness she was beloved gave her, in spite of every obstacle, a secret spring of sweet interior satisfaction, that inspired her with courage to brave whatever trials might yet await her. Yet, though sufficiently in love to be susceptible of this delightful exaltation, she was not so far gone as not to be aware that this feeling, if carried to excess, might interfere with her other duties. Leonora was not one of those heroines who imagine a degree of impassioned and morbid

sensibility to be a proof of an elevated soul, that places them above the ordinary claims and common cares of life. On the contrary, the perception of this first symptom of the encroachments of passion only served to awaken her vigilance, and redouble her attention to the performance of her relative duties; lest, by the concentration of all her feelings on one single object, her heart might be contracted, her other affections chilled, and, under the impression that she was the most generous and exalted, she should finally become the most selfish of human beings.

CHAP. XIII.

No: when the tempest rages round my head,
I give my branches wider to the air,
And strike my roots more deeply.
JEPHSON. *Count of Narbonne.*

ALURED was now wholly Lord Trelawney's. It was not long before the earl explained his particular views for him. The expedition on which Alured's regiment, among many others, had been sent out, when his unfortunate accident had prevented him from joining it, was terminated, and with far less glory than had been anticipated. Lord Trelawney knew, from unquestionable authority, that the regiment would not soon again be called into action. He represented to his grandson that this would be a favourable opportunity to retire from a profession more suited to his former situation than

to his present hopes and prospects, and to enter a line that would bring his peculiar talents into a more conspicuous light.

"My opinion of your abilities can hardly admit of increase," Lord Trelawney observed: "properly directed, there is nothing to which they may not entitle you to aspire. If you will suffer yourself to be guided by me on your outset in political life, I prophesy that those who have rejoiced in the calamities of our family, will live to witness the triumph of one branch, at least, of the house of Trelawney."

Would Alured, some years before, have believed any person foretelling that he should live to hear such flattering words from Lord Trelawney, and not feel intoxicated with delight?—Yet such was actually the case; and such it almost always is, by the time we arrive at the attainment of our delusive wishes.

Shortly afterwards, the military resig-

nation of Sir Alured Veré was publicly notified; and a much longer period did not intervene, before he was duly returned one of the representatives of the ancient and honourable borough of * * * *. It being generally circulated that this young candidate for fame had, for some time past, enjöyed the confidence and instructions of the venerable and eloquent statesman Lord Trelawney, the most sanguine expectations were excited the first time Vere arose to speak in public. But expectation, however high, was surpassed by the result. It was a question of importance, and one for which he had diligently prepared himself. The brilliancy of his wit and playfulness of his fancy, were not called in to compensate for the scantiness of knowledge, or deficiency in argument, but to grace and adorn the one, to enforce and illustrate the other. Persuasion hung upon his lips—harmony dwelt upon his periods—while the graces of deportment, the union of elegance,

dignity, and self-possession, in every look and motion, added enchantment to the power of eloquence, and beauty to the force of truth. But while the columns of the public papers were filled with his praises, and every private circle seemed anxious to add his name to their number, the simple exclamation of Lord Trelawney conveyed a prouder conviction of desert to Alured's heart, when, transported beyond his usual moderation by this display of every-way kindred talent, he cried out, "And this was the being from whom I so long voluntarily estranged myself!"

Distinguished by so rare a combination of endowments, and introduced under auspices so favourable, Alured's society was universally courted by the noble, the witty, and the fair. A London winter was to him a new ordeal. Abroad, he had mingled in the highest circles; but, for the combination of beauty and talent, of elegant trifling, and more ele-

gant literature, that he met with among the more distinguished classes of his own fair country-women, he still was unprepared.

Received, wherever he went, with an eagerness bordering on enthusiasm, Alured listened with pleasure, perhaps with too much pleasure, to the enchanting voice of praise,—that sweetest music to the ambitious mind; 'till, palled with the excess of what he, at first, had gladly welcomed, his taste became fastidious, and the tribute that he would have missed, had it been withheld, no longer afforded him gratification when presented.

In the world, those who are flattered to excess, always end by despising their flatterers; most probably, from a secret consciousness of the unworthiness of the idol thus exalted.

Moving in scenes that were new to him, Alured saw much to admire, but much also to condemn. His poetical amusements were not wholly laid aside;

but in the place of those forms of beauty and grandeur which had formerly arisen beneath his pen, the exposure of folly, and castigation of vice, were more frequently the subjects of his muse. Several satirical pieces were attributed to him, which he had never even seen; but some few were acknowledged, and *that* was sufficient to make him as much feared as liked in society. Some there were, who thought this light sarcastic vein incompatible with that sublimity of tragic fire which predominated in the fables of Rienzi and Fiesco:—they forgot that, although malice may sometimes make the satirist, the disposition is often, also, originally induced by the too exquisite perception of the beautiful, the great, and good. The young enthusiast enters the world, his imagination fired, his soul preoccupied with those pictures of sublimity and moral grace that have employed his studious hours. In that world, he sees no prototypes of those

forms of ideal beauty, those heroes and divinities, with whom, in fancy, he so long has wandered. Disgusted, he turns from the picture of real life; and, according as in his humour the grave or gay predominates, vents his disappointment in tragedy or satire—in the bitterness of invective, or the querulousness of complaint.——

Such was the apology made by a zealous admirer of Alured's, at a crowded literary conversazione, where Fashion had assembled more idlers than Taste could ever have summoned beneath her standard.—Separated from the group that were conversing by a ponderous commentator, who had obtained admission on the strength of some useful compilations, and who certainly made up in personal bulk his deficiency in mental importance, Alured heard, unobserved, the reply of the lady to whom this observation was addressed.

"I own I am interested for Sir Alured

Vere — I knew him abroad, and regret this misapplication of his abilities. Misfortune must have sadly changed a disposition originally the most engaging. What I fear for him is, that while he directs the whole power of his fine talents to the delineation of follies and errors which, without his aid, make their possessors sufficiently contemptible, he does not perceive the danger he incurs of injury to himself, from the resentment of those who, owing to their very vices, are capable of a degree of malice, his finely tempered mind is, perhaps, unable to conceive. In his present pursuits, he involuntarily reminds me of the celebrated Italian artist *, who, undertaking to pourtray a Chimæra from the united deformities of the various venomous reptiles his country produced, shut himself up with them, and pursued his labour with such intensity of attention, that he

* Lionardo da Vinci. — See Vasari's Lives of the Painters.

perceived not, as they died around him, that he was himself almost destroyed by the poison they exhaled."

It was impossible not to recognise the voice of Ellen Fitzalbert — Alured soon took occasion to approach her. She was in second mourning for her father, whom she had lost some months before, and looked to great advantage, at the same time that the pensive harmony of her voice and countenance were in admirable unison with the chastened elegance and simplicity of her dress, which altogether threw a veil over her dazzling attractions at the moment most congenial to Alured's feelings. To meet with her in such a circle was truly refreshing, after the affected and pedantic females to whom he had been obliged to devote his attention. He found he was to address her by the title of Lady Arlington: she had given her hand to Newborough, who had, in compliance with Mrs. Fitzalbert's last expressed wishes, applied, in behalf

of his wife, for the revival, in his own person, of the dormant title in the family. With much trouble and expense he had succeeded. It remained to be seen whether, as Lord Arlington, he was less awkward, stiff, and ungraceful, than when bearing the humbler designation of George Newborough, Esq.

Many other topics were touched upon during Ellen's conversation with Alured; and she contrived (ingeniously he thought) to turn the discourse to Leonora, about whose present situation she expressed much interest. The subject was, at first, a painful one; but it was too much in unison with the hearts of both the speakers long to continue so.

"She loved me once," said Ellen, in an accent of the deepest sensibility, "and, since circumstances divided us, I have never met her equal." She then adverted to many little anecdotes during their shortlived intimacy at Bath, which forcibly reminded Alured of the charac-

ter that had rivetted his youthful admiration, and fixed the choice of his maturer years.

In such discourse he found a soothing spell, which extracted the fiery dart that so long had rankled in his breast. He had just begun to express his satisfaction at this meeting, and his hope of frequently renewing the pleasure he now enjoyed, when Ellen replied, that she was on the eve of departure from town, to spend some weeks at the villa of a friend, who had promised, during that period, a most interesting variety of amusements should diversify the time. — "But," added she, after a pause and a smile, "I don't see why that should separate us — I'll introduce you to Lady Valmorden; and, I doubt, she will be eager to add Sir Alured Vere to the group of "Inimitables" who are to make an earthly paradise of her charming séjour of Marlivale. — Here she comes; so ——"

"I thank your ladyship," said Alured,

laughing: "I am rather obliged to you for giving me warning just time enough to make my retreat;" and, with a graceful bow to Ellen, he escaped from the crowded assembly, at the moment this celebrated personage had nearly glided over to them.

Lady Valmorden was well known to him, by character, as a *bel-esprit*, a free-thinker, and *no* beauty—three things which, in a woman, he thought inexcusable. But, on the whole, the manner in which he had spent this evening had a pleasing effect upon his spirits.

For the first time since his residence in London, Alured closed his eyes without making one severe reflection upon the busy crowd among whom he had mingled; and, instead of the absurd and fantastic figures upon whom his imagination had lately delighted to dwell, fancy presented, in sleep, the faultless form and polished mind of Lady Arlington.

In the mean time, Lady Arlington, whom we left at the conversazione, was accosted, in her usual animated manner, by Lady Valmorden. Approaching her, with all the fashionable affectation of enthusiasm in friendship, and whispering, though there was nobody very near, "My dearest creature," she said, "you behold me *au desespoir*. — Odious Sir Thomas Winstanley, an uncle of Lord Valmorden's, has just died, for no other purpose than to break up my charming party to Marlivale. — I must put it off, like Felix's repentance, to a more convenient season. — Your husband, the properest person in the world to announce a mortifying piece of intelligence, has just told it me. — By the by, I have a collection of recent *Ineptics* of his, at your service, absolutely *impayable*. — Hush, you shan't say a word to stop me; rather thank me for not sending them to the Morning Post. — The first was to myself. — Talking of Lady Luton's last fancy

ball, your lord most politely regretted that he had not been able to find me out all night.—"That was not on account of a mask then," I observed, "for masks were not admitted, and I personated *la Bergère des Alpes.*" — "True, madam," he returned with a bow, "but then your face, your ladyship will remember, was *wholly* buried in an enormous and *most becoming* straw hat—one that served to hide your features completely."—"*My* costume did not aspire to the becoming," observed ugly Mrs. Howard, "but I hope your lordship admired its theatrical fidelity, as one of the witches of Macbeth." — "It reminded me, indeed," replied your sposo, "of a passage in another play of Shakspeare's — "presented thee more hideous than thou art." "I mean, "he added, stammering, "less handsome — less handsome would be a great deal better than more hideous, and means exactly the same thing.—"Assured-

ly," my lord," said I, "and we'll print it so, in the next commentary on King John."

"Are you at the end of your anecdotes," asked Ellen.

"No, you must hear one more — his best sally was to poor Lady Lyddel, and the beauty of it consisted in the utter unconsciousness with which it was uttered. I have it from indisputable authority. Lady Lyddel's is one of those characters, you know, that are but dubious, or rather, to avail myself of a hacknied expression, not dubious at all.— Lord Arlington, who happened to be ignorant of her ladyship's vagaries, and who takes it in his head to think his own reputation for wisdom as a statesman liable to be affected by every squib, was complaining bitterly in her company, of the liberties taken with it, in that trumpery publication entitled, "Stars of Fashion, or the Northern Galaxy." "Oh, my lord, you must put yourself above such things," Lady Lyddel exclaimed;

"nobody escapes them; I myself have received some severe strokes in that very publication."

"That may be, madam," replied Lord Arlington, his thoughts wholly engrossed by the superior importance of his own political reputation; "but, allow me to observe, there is a *great* difference between your ladyship and me. I — I — I — have a character to lose."

"I hope," said the pure-minded, yet compassionate Ellen, "she was aware that my lord was merely opposing the importance of a man's public character to the comparative insignificance of a female ——"

"No matter what she was aware of — such persons deserve all sorts of mortifications. I wish I could see some fair game," continued Lady Valmorden, looking round among the company; "nothing but insipidity — nothing so amusing as poor, good-natured Mrs. Montresor, sailing round her card-table, and ex-

claiming, "Well, I hope you are *all* winning!" or begging her daughter Leonora to recommend her some charming new novel, that will "serve to put her to sleep: though, to be sure, nothing was half so good as *Fielding*'s delightful story of the Vicar of Wakefield, the man who maintained it was wrong to marry twice, and wrote the Treatise on *Mahogany!* Well, though the dear Colonel had been three times married, she must own she never read that book without being quite a convert to *mahogany!*"

Well aware that Lady Valmorden was, in this instance, exerting her powers of exaggeration and ridicule, for the purpose of amusement at the moment, Ellen gently checked her; and, as soon as it was possible to oppose a word to this torrent of volubility, turned the conversation to more agreeable subjects. But, in all she said, Lady Valmorden had a deeper design than Lady Arlington suspected.—While Ellen retained re-

spect for her husband, or regret for her friend, she could not be wholly her's; and such Lady Valmorden was determined she should be; though the power this dangerous woman exerted over the heart-wounded Ellen, rather resembled a painful and dangerous fascination, than a pleasing and soothing attraction.

CHAP. XIV.

Elle plaît, elle choque, on l'aime, on la hait, on la cherche, on l'evite, on diroit qu'elle communique aux autres la bizarrerie de son caractère.

Portrait de Madame la Princesse de Talmont.

THOUGH an English peeress, Lady Valmorden could hardly be called an English woman. Her father was a teacher of the French language, who ran away with her mother, the daughter of a wealthy citizen, to whom he, for some time, had been giving instructions. By this step the young lady irrevocably disobliged her family, and put an end to her own pecuniary prospects.

M. Versenai, having professed republican principles, quitted his country on the downfall of one of those factions, which, at the commencement of the French revolution, had distinguished their

shortlived reign by bloodshed and terror. He was, therefore, looked upon in England, not only as a man of desperate fortunes, but of dangerous principles.

The miscellaneous education that the young Lesbina received from her ill-matched parents, though little calculated to direct her mind or ameliorate her heart, was, perhaps, more favourable to the developement of her peculiar talents, than one more regular, and more carefully followed up.

From her mother, who was an enthusiast in music, and understood it well theoretically, she soon learnt to play upon several instruments, and to accompany those wild lays which it was one of her earliest amusements to compose. From the habit of daily conversation with her father, she was a perfect Frenchwoman; and, moreover, acquired that easy self-confidence, and that address, at once vivacious and insinuating, which distinguishes the females of that country.

Such was Lesbina Versenai when her accomplishments recommended her to the notice of a widow lady of rank, whose daughters her father attended in the capacity of language master.

The dowager Lady Valmorden had two daughters and a son; and she soon became so prepossessed in favour of the young Lesbina, as to request she might be permitted to become an inmate of her family, solemnly engaging to take upon herself the care of her future fortune. Here Lesbina staid three years, and was perfected in every accomplishment, by the same masters that instructed the daughters of her noble friend.

Her ladyship scrupulously attended to the request of M. and Madame Versenai, that she would not interfere with the religion of their darling child. This caution was the more necessary, as it was by no means certain what Mademoiselle Versenai's religion was to be. Her

mother was a Protestant—her father a nominal Catholic, a real infidel. In the almost daily disputes between these worthy persons, Lesbina was so often appealed to, as the arbiter of their otherwise interminable difficulties, that she, at length, acquired a good deal of that laudable indifference and impartiality so desirable in the character of a mediator. The young lady was, indeed, sometimes suspected of a leaning towards the Protestant faith, she so frequently and loudly expressed her aversion to "works of supererogation." One text of scripture she was, also, remarkably fond of quoting—that which prohibits the being "righteous overmuch."

So partial was Lady Valmorden to Lesbina, that but one circumstance in the world appeared capable of disuniting them. "Look not at my only son," was expressed in every word and action of the venerable Lady Valmorden; but this "only son" was the sole object the

young Sappho judged worthy of her ambition.

Lord Valmorden was, at that time, just become his own master, being scarcely of age. Gay, good-humoured, not over-burthened with sense, and very fond of "philandering" with the fair creature, who, he declared, seemed invited by his lady mother for no other purpose than to relieve the ennui of the country. But Lesbina, though she allowed him to amuse himself with the idea that he had made a conquest, had a deeper design in view.—She was not handsome, but her fine, dark, speaking eyes, united to an expression of native archness and acquired coquetry, rendered her countenance, in the opinion of some tolerable judges, absolutely fascinating. Still this was not much on which to build the conquest of a peer: yet, whether the success ought to be ascribed to the lady's ability, or the gentleman's easiness, certain it is, she did, in time, succeed;

and the circumstance, after overwhelming the aged Lady Valmorden with indignation, was generally understood to have accelerated her death.

Thus relieved from all restraint, Lesbina, now Lady Valmorden, began her career by announcing herself as the brilliant patroness of men of talents and letters. Many such crowded to her parties; and, though not persons of the first consequence in the literary world, they served to stimulate her vanity, and increase her thirst for applause.

Meantime, Lord Valmorden found himself a stranger in his own house. Accident had made him a peer, but nature had made him an honest, openhearted, hospitable country gentleman. Those friends, with whom he wished to be surrounded, he now found it difficult to collect; for his lady, profuse to her favourites, was rather apt to be narrow towards those whom she was wont to designate as "*unidea'd*," soulless beings."

His lordship remonstrated — Lady Valmorden replied; and the weekly conversaziones and Sunday concerts *alloit toujours leur train.* At length they parted; and Lord Valmorden was heard to declare, that the day on which he bade her farewell, was the first pleasant one he had known since that on which he was drawn in to marry Lesbina Versenai.

They had been a few years separated, when the Viscount was attacked with an alarming and dangerous illness. It was then some compunctious visitings seized Lady Valmorden. — She flew to her suffering husband — he accepted, with gratitude, her late, yet still welcome, attentions.

It is not easy constantly to contemplate the afflictions, to minister to the wants, and anticipate the fate even of a person that is indifferent to us, without feeling gradually interested in the object of our care: — how was it possible, then, that a tender solicitude should not

spring up in the heart of Lesbina, when beholding the daily, the hourly inroads of a fatal distemper on the life of a husband whose care, as long as she permitted it, had ever been to make her happy! These feelings, united to a justly awakened remorse, rendered her attentions so tender and unremitting, that Lord Valmorden owed to them all the alleviation his last hours were capable of receiving. To show his sense of them, he banished all recollection of her preceding conduct; and left her so amply provided for, that, had she been inclined to marry again, there was no doubt but she would soon have found suitors to entreat to exchange her widow's crape for bridal white. But so far was this from being in her ladyship's contemplation, that she was, in the first agonies of her grief and self-reproach, with difficulty prevented from taking a vow never to marry. Mademoiselle Agathe, her French femme-de-chambre, threw herself, with a most theatrical air,

at the feet of her mistress, and obtained a mitigation of the terms, by which it was changed into a vow never to forget Lord Valmorden.

In a mind of a different stamp, this would have, perhaps, been a juncture for forming and fixing the character. But, unaccustomed to trace moral obligations to a religious source, the impression made by the late melancholy scenes she had gone through, on the volatile mind of Lesbina was transient as violent. Her heart, originally susceptible, had bled over the sufferings of her lord; but he had long ceased to possess that strongest hold over the affections of man or woman — the being necessary to her happiness. During his days of health she had danced and sung, she had talked and laughed, she had read, written, and declaimed — without him. *His* applause had never been the aim of any of her pursuits, nor his happiness the object of her efforts.

Her return to dissipation produced its

usual effect of blunting the remembrance of grief; or, if sometimes she felt a rising regret, the pang was short as the loss was trifling: she soon forgot it in a recurrence to her habitual pursuits. It was but to dance and sing — to talk and laugh — to read, write, and declaim, as she had ever done — without him!

Lady Valmorden was at this time a still young, and not inconsolable widow; with an income of five thousand a year, of which she might dispose as she pleased, and an elegant villa, which she took care always to fill with the best company. Her appearance was prepossessing, from an air of elegance and fashion that pervaded it: she rouged highly, moved gracefully, and expressed herself, on every subject, with fluency and ease. — Still, she was deficient in most of the requisites that constitute personal beauty: her figure wanted symmetry, her features regularity, and her complexion bloom: her style of dress was fantastic, yet becoming; for what might have been

termed absurd or extravagant in a less distinguished woman, was only reckoned pleasingly fanciful in Lady Valmorden. Such was the friend of Lady Arlington, who, being obliged, for the reasons already mentioned, to give up her party to Marlivale, spent her first days of seclusion in new projects for diversifying and filling up her time, till the period arrived that she could put this favourite project in execution. The first evening she made her re-appearance in public, gave birth to an incident, which her ladyship was not long before she communicated to the present depository of all her thoughts and wishes.

Ellen found her at her toilette, improving her complexion with more than usual care. The tint was so delicate, a rose-leaf need not have disowned it.

"How do you like my character for to-day?" said Lady Valmorden, as she surmounted her close black crop with a flaxen chevelure: "tender sentiment,

light brown tresses, and *rouge à l'Héloïse*. You remember, Ellen, St. Preux's inimitable apostrophe to the picture of Julia, in which, while describing the soft rose tint as it gradually deepened towards the lower part of the cheek of his beloved, he instructs all females how, most judiciously, to apply those aids, without which so few can arm for conquest.— Oh, Jean Jaques," she continued, looking up with a mixture of playfulness and enthusiasm at a medallion of the philosopher, which, shaded with rose-coloured drapery, hung just above her toilette, "Priest of the Passions, to whom I pay my unsophisticated worship! master of every mode of harmony and art of life! let us but trust to thy direction, and thou wilt show us, alike, the justest modes of reasoning, and the surest secrets of pleasing — wilt teach the legislator how to rule a nation, and guide a woman where to place her rouge!"

"By this infusion of literature and sen-

timent into the business of the toilette," observed Lady Arlington, " I greatly suspect some lettered admirer is now in view. Apropos, Lesbina, would it be a bad idea, do you think, to ascertain the dangler of the day by the variations of the rouge?—For the Baron de Beauvais, I remember, the " Rouge coquette" was employed; while for honest Mr. Sandford, with his acres and English comfort, scarcely a vestige ——"

" *Méchante*," exclaimed Lady Valmorden, putting her hand on her mouth, " I never was farther in my life from a conquest than at this moment. Yet, the other night, a little incident occurred, that certainly might have been productive of amusing consequences.—I was at that dreadful crush at the Marchioness's, where, you know, there were three carriages broke to pieces, four ladies fainted, and six were carried out in hysterics. Before I had passed through the first of the grand suite of apartments,

being firmly convinced that the wisest measure for me was to *retourner sur mes pas*, I did so; and after a good quarter of an hour's exposure to suffocation, had actually passed the door and got upon the staircase, which was equally crowded, when I felt myself forcibly impelled forward by a gentleman, who exclaimed in a loud whisper, " Make haste — your carriage is ready — there is not a moment to be lost." I stared at my unceremonious conductor—we both started, for we were perfectly unknown to each other: my eyes were fixed upon a face and form *tout gracieux* — gay, glowing, and animated; yet dignified, noble, and commanding. The accidental resemblance of my dress to that of a lady he was taking care of, and from whom he was separated in the crowd, occasioned his ludicrous mistake. Though we could neither of us forbear laughing at the incident, a most *improving* blush crimsoned over his fine features, as he uttered a rapid yet

graceful apology; and then with a profound bow, left me to renew his search of the lady entrusted to his care."

"I'd risk something," exclaimed Ellen, "that brilliant apparition was Sir Alured Vere."

"The same—the author of some rhapsodical satires and detestable tragedies."

"Nay, now, his unintentional freedom has made you severe. I cannot conceive, Lesbina, how, with your taste, you can express yourself in that manner of such a man."

"Nor I neither," replied Lady Valmorden, with a gay ingenuousness that formed a pleasing trait in her character, "except that he affronted me desperately on the day following:—I dined at Lady Ossory's; he was there too: when we were introduced, he bowed so formally—no look of pleased recognition—nothing that said "you are the lady to whom my lucky stars already introduced me at the Marchioness's:" then I afterwards over-

heard Lady Ossory whispering to him about me in her most panegyrical note, and the creature answered something about "that dangerous thing a female wit"—that a female *esprit fort* was not a woman — and similar *fadeurs*, for which, if I ever forgive him ——"

"You will have the pleasure of doing a magnanimous action, and an agreeable one at the same time, if I am not much mistaken."

"I don't know but you are right; for, in the course of that day he charmed all his hearers: the variety and quick succession of his ideas—the nervous, appropriate, picturesque, and, at the same time, elegant language in which he clothed them — language equally distinguished by its rapidity, precision, and brilliancy —"

"I see," interrupted Ellen, "I must allow your musical enthusiasm to lead you to apply, to other subjects, the terms that belong peculiarly to that art."

" As you please, but you will agree that no music can convey pleasure equal to the conversation of such a man — you know him, and must have frequently experienced it."

" I have, and, in return, endeavoured to persuade him to check that propensity to satire, which is the only shade to his, otherwise, uncommon and amiable character."

" If you try, you will succeed — remonstrances from lovely lips seldom fail of effect. Happy Ellen! your smiles possess a witchery mine would in vain attempt to emulate. I have seen enough of our poet already to perceive that, like all his tribe, he is an enthusiastic admirer of female beauty, and that, whenever he yields to persuasion, it must be " Persuasion sleeping upon roses."

Lady Valmorden, never, by any chance, allowed merit to a living author. She was, however, a passionate admirer of the Petrarchal, Miltonic, or legitimate

sonnet. A species of composition, the mechanism of which I would more particularly explain, did I not consider that the initiated already understood it perfectly, while others would hardly thank me for my trouble. The king of Prussia, who wanted to erect a temple for the exercise of every different form of worship, was yet so intolerant in the article of music, that it was dangerous to praise the compositions of more than two favourite masters in his dominions. In like manner, Lady Valmorden, though no bigot or prude where only matters of religion or morality were concerned, took fire the moment any one ventured to speak a word in favour of the elegiac or irregular sonnet.

"You behold me in the greatest distress," she said one morning to Lady Arlington. "I had advanced some way in my translation of those exquisite poems of Dante on his heavenly Beatrice, but I have parted with my Florentine

professor Celestini. He really grew too insolent: think of his disputing with me upon the ancient *Lingua Toscana*. There occurred a compound epithet — I translated it one way, he understood it in another. — I proved a thousand times over to the animal that it was Florentine —*Lo stile Dantesco*—and could admit but one translation: — he only continued to insist that, in his country, the word was taken in a different acceptation. "Oh, very well, Signor," I coolly replied, "if you understand Italian better than I do*, there's an end of the matter" — paid him his five guineas, and dismissed him."

To divert her ladyship's chagrin, Ellen began complimenting her upon her last published volume of "Miltonic Sonnets." At that moment, Sir Alured Vere was announced.

"Oh, Sir Alured," said Lady Val-

* Similar disputes were of daily recurrence between a language-master and a literary lady of celebrity, lately deceased.

morden, who had entered upon the full career of literary disquisition, " there *is* a question which I have longed to ask you. Who is the Una of your delightful " Lyrics?" — Una — To Una — I don't remember to have met with such a name any where in poetry."

Alured started. The sacred name of his heart's real love had never passed his lips. Like the fountain Arethusa, that flowed beneath the ocean yet never mingled with its tide, he had preserved it, pure and unsullied, from any admixture of the pleasures, the interests, or the cares that now engrossed him. " I believe I had better confess," he said, " that Una is a mere poetic coinage of the brain — a vision of ideal feminine excellence — I took the hint from Spenser."

" You could not choose a safer author," returned Lady Valmorden; " it is a field where few will follow you."

" I am surprised, my dear creature," said Lady Arlington, " that you, who

are possessed of taste in such a pre-eminent degree, can voluntarily deprive yourself of the exquisite pleasure afforded by passages of Spenser. I own he has great inequalities. With his frequent beauties, his occasional poverty of language, and tediousness, his work may be compared to Dr. Clarke's description of the Crimea — three fourths a dreary, barren *Steppe* *, but the remainder unequalled for fertility and cultivation."

"Or suppose," added Lady Valmorden, burlesquing the idea, "we compare his long-drawn allegory, in its tedious progress, to a beautiful Indian serpent, the winding and lengthened involution of whose slow and tortuous folds affords the gazer more leisure to remark the splendour and variety of the tints that decorate it. — But enough of Spenser. — What have we here?" (examining some splendidly illustrated poems that were scattered around the room.)—Her lady-

* A desert.

ship then began reviewing them, in her summary manner, endeavouring, as was her custom, to "*make points*" as she went along. —

"Nothing new, I see. — "The World before the Flood" — antediluvian stuff. — "The Pleasures of Memory" — very much admired by those who have the pleasure of remembering it—I cannot say I am of the number."

"To the feeling heart, that can never be old: but your ladyship is unsparingly severe this morning."

Lady Valmorden resumed, — "The Lay of the last Minstrel." Sir Alured would excommunicate me were I to say I should not have lamented much had it proved the "Minstrel's last Lay."

Alured, whose high, impassioned spirit always inclined him towards the lofty and *Chevaleresque*, took up, with enthusiasm, the cause of the Northern Ariosto. "Other bards" were then discussed; particularly *that one*, the

characteristic of whose genius is versatility, as that of his conversation is polished vivacity; he who, after levying tribute from each different province of the parnassian empire, has, at length, planted his standard in the fields of "Oriental Romance."

During this time Lady Valmorden appeared evidently impatient. Again she tried to change the subject.

"Well, well, well — enough of those — could we not talk of something more interesting?"

"Madam," said Alured, with apparent carelessness, "the edition disappeared so quickly, I was unable to obtain a sight of the "Miltonic Sonnets."

There was a good-humoured, laughing egotism, a sort of decisive, half-avowed vanity and selfishness in the manner of Lady Valmorden, a kind of restless yet pleasing petulance, which the vivacity of her temper rendered habitual, but which the apparent sweetness of her disposition

prevented from ever giving offence. All she wished to be generally acknowledged, was, that, from the time of the Lesbian Sappho to Anna Seward of Litchfield, no female ever equalled, in brilliancy, originality, or pathos, the poetry of Lady Valmorden. In point of beauty, she did not conceive herself quite entitled to set up for the successor of a Coventry; nor yet in vocal execution to be the rival of a Catalini; but she doubted not she excelled the one as much in a certain indescribable fascination, as the other in force and variety of musical expression. Those trifling points conceded, Lady Valmorden scarcely thought it necessary to demand an assent to the proposition that, in all branches of literature — in physics — metaphysics — ethics — politics—polemics—she was qualified intuitively and authoritatively to decide. And who could doubt it? In matters of religion, for instance, her ladyship had read half a hundred French

authors on the wrong side of the question, without having once puzzled her head by perusing a single argument in support of the opposite opinion. Bating these few moderate pretensions, Lady Valmorden was the most humble, modest, unassuming creature in the universe. Her humility was, indeed, often put to a most embarrassing test. Though, from early education, a furious Democrat, her ladyship, from the operation of subsequent causes, could scarcely ever find herself in the presence of elevated rank without making her mental *salam* to it. So that, applying two expressions of the country of whose manners and institutions she was exclusively fond, Lady Valmorden might be termed a *Frondeuse* of Aristocracy in theory, and a *Prôneuse* of rank in practice. In material points, Alured's opinion of her ladyship remained unchanged. He thought it must ever remain so. He found her by far too amusing, however, to persevere in

avoiding her society ; and in July, upon the prorogation of parliament, she had the triumph and " glory" of adding the name of Sir Alured Vere to the brilliant list of " Inimitables" that were to spend the summer at her Villa of Marlivale.

CHAP. XV.

When love grows cool
It useth an enforced civility. SHAKSPEARE.

Oh! thou art all composed
Of melting piety and tender love
SMOLLETT. — *Regicide*.

WHILE such were Alured's employments, Leonora's time was engaged in a more praiseworthy, if less agreeable manner, in administering consolation to the drooping heart of one, who had hoped, ere now, to call her by the endearing name of sister. If any thing had been wanting to dispose the tender Leonora to pity, that motive was supplied in the affinity of Constantia's sorrows to her own. *She* had not, it is true, lost a lover by death, but an authority she could not withstand kept him far distant from her;

and a thousand circumstances seemed in league to weaken her influence over his heart. The Countess Von Lindenthal affected to take it very ill that Leonora should bestow more of her time upon Constantia than upon herself.

"I wonder you can be so fond of that girl," she said, "'tis an absolute sin in her thus to continue murmuring against the dispensations of Providence. She ought to turn to her own resources, and not lean so heavily upon you, Leonora."

"And supposing her to have none," interrupted the benevolent Leonora, "is she not only the more to be commiserated? — A woman who has assiduously cultivated her abilities, retains, even under the severest disappointments, taste, talents, mental avocations, that prevent her from yielding wholly to despair. But, in one who has none of those, is it a crime to lament the vanished happiness which nothing can supply?

She whose sole perception of pleasure consisted in the innocent affection she inspired, whose bounded circle of ideas never strayed beyond one loved object, surely demands the largest share of our pity and indulgence. Is she to be condemned for those very deficiencies that render her loss more grievous?—is she to be censured the more severely for lamenting, because she laments her ALL?"

"That's very well said: but you took up quite a different view of the question, I remember, at Leolin Abbey."

"Because the question *was* different: a living lover cannot continue, without a diminution of dignity, to be so bitterly deplored by a woman of pride and delicacy. But now—— Oh, Lucinda!" continued the affectionate Leonora, after an agitated pause, "every day I feel my brother was not easily to be forgot!"

Meanwhile Mrs. Montresor, when discoursing with Leonora, continued to utter the most sanguine prophecies, and

to urge her looking forward to a time when no farther obstacles should be opposed to her wishes. To see how far such hopes were likely to be realized, we must now quit Miss Montresor, and revert to the joyous party assembled at Marlivale.——

Lady Valmorden had promised her guests a variety of amusement, and they were not disappointed.

In enumerating them over to Lady Arlington,—"You must know that I have provided butts for you," she said; "I mean others besides poor Ridge and Miss Freemantle." (Her ladyship alluded to two miserable retainers, who were frequently the marks of her sarcastic wit.)—"I have really ordered proper shooting butts to be erected to diversify our morning amusements; while, for the evenings, there is a private theatre, where we will have French and Italian pieces alternately—no vulgar English—that is the only thing I am determined on. You and

Sir Alured, I know, speak the *Lingua Toscana* as well as your own: *I* shall make an admirable *Soubrette* in the French comedies; and I doubt not but we shall find ways and means most admirably to fill up the rest of the Dramatis Personæ."

The first week passed at Marlivale much as Lady Valmorden had arranged. The evenings were devoted to music or talking over plans for the projected theatrical amusements; and in the mornings the ladies walked, rode, played at billiards, or exercised themselves with the bow and arrow. In this last amusement, the dexterity of Lady Arlington was unequalled. It was easy for her to distance competition at Marlivale, after having been adjudged the prize in several public contests of archery. One morning Sir Alured surprised her in the moment of victory; her cheek flushed with triumph, her fine hair partly dishevelled, and the graces of her

nymph-like form, improved and set off to the greatest advantage by the healthful and bracing exercise. He could not conceive that she should have been content for several days to display her unrivalled excellence and grace merely to female spectators; but this retiring modesty, even if it had not been natural, was judicious in the inseparable friend of the dashing Lady Valmorden. Two such luminaries could not have otherwise existed in the same sphere. The attractions of Lady Valmorden resembled the artificial brilliancy of fireworks — dazzling, eccentric, and betraying their earthly origin by the very excess of their artificial and unnatural glare; on the contrary, the mild, pensive beauties of Lady Arlington, like the western star "with green-trembling ray," poured a flood of meek and tempered lustre, bright, calm, and pure as the etherial fount from which it flowed.

The first comedy represented at the

private theatre of Marlivale was "Le Méchant," by Gresset: "Le Glorieux," by Destouches, and "Nanine," succeeded, and were acted with applause. The versatility of Lady Arlington, who was certainly the heroine of this theatre, was next displayed in an Italian piece. Three were offered to her choice — the "Semiramide," "Olimpiade," or "Didone," all by Metastasio. The numberless beauties of the Olimpiade, during the composition of which the author declares he shed as many tears as he ever drew from his audience, induced her long to hesitate. But the more striking character of Didone, as an "*acting* piece," at length decided the preference. In the varied situations it presented, Ellen amply evinced the justness of her ideas, and the versatility of her powers. The dignity of insulted majesty, the bitter irony of outraged affection, were admirably mingled in her address to Jarbas: —

Ebben sarai contento
Mi volesti infelice? Eccomi sola
Tradita, abbandonata,
Senza Eneo, senza amici, e senza regno—
Debole mi volesti? Ecco Didone
Ridotta al fine a lagrimar; non basta?
Mi vuoi supplice ancora? — Si de' miei mali
Chiedo ad Jarba ristoro.
Da Jarba per pietà la morte imploro.

But it was in the celebrated declaration of Didone —

"Son' Regina, e sono amante" —

that Alured felt transported while he gazed, and could subscribe with implicit faith to the account Metastasio gives of the reception his favourite daughter (as he termed the "Didone") met with from his enthusiastic countrymen.

"It was applauded throughout," he said, "with marks of the most vehement approbation; but when, announcing her resolution, the majestic, yet tender Didone began the impressive "*Son' Regina, e sono amante*," the audience, as by one consentaneous movement, rose from their

seats, and a murmur of delight for some moments prevented the piece from going on."

This seemed destined to be a most intoxicating evening for Alured. Lady Valmorden had, at different times, displayed the light graces of her form in "Psyche" and "Zémire et Azor." After the performance of Didone, she appeared attired for one of the principal characters in a little musical drama composed by herself, and taken from Dryden's celebrated poem of "The Flower and the Leaf."

Lady Valmorden's character was that of the Lady of the Daisy, or *Marguerite*, while Lady Arlington, whom he had already admired in the snowy vest, golden zone, and purple flowing robe of the Carthaginian queen, appeared to equal advantage as the Lady of the Leaf. The scenery was romantic, the poetry pretty, and the costume of the knights and ladies drest according to the description in Dryden —

"Who are the knights in green—and what the train
Of ladies drest with daisies on the plain,"

was, at once, tasteful and splendid.

This little drama contained several very pointed allusions to the double character of the laurel leaf, as consecrated equally to the hero and the poet.

After the performance, while the spectators were surrounding her with incense, Lady Valmorden, determined not to let her intention pass unnoticed by Alured, whispered him, "What says the Knight of the Leaf?"

Alured started at so pointed an application; while Lady Arlington, who overheard her, repeated, "*Trajan est-il content?*"

"Lady Arlington's performance certainly deserves the largest share of praise," said Lady Valmorden, not pleased with the allusion. "Good people, I beg you will transfer all the fine

things you are saying from the Lady of the Flower to the Lady of the Leaf."

"She should be sung!" exclaimed Alured, rapturously: then added, in a lower tone, to Ellen, "The cold and commonplace language of society is unequal to the demands made by such various excellencies."

"Indeed," returned Ellen, "I think you are in debt to me, Sir Alured. — I believe I am the only lady of this circle whom you have not sung!"

"Have I not?" repeated Alured, in a tone that still more piqued Lady Valmorden. Rallying her spirits, however, she rattled, with her usual ease, on the subject of poetical divinities, from Dante's ideal Beatrice, and Tasso's royal Leonora, to Camöens's Caterina, Spenser's Rosalind, the Amanda of Thomson, and Pope's Belinda, till she finished with exclaiming, "Which style suits Lady Arlington? — or are the verses to resemble

those of Voltaire to the sister of the great Frederic?" *

"And which the great Frederic never forgave!" interrupted Ellen, warmly. "No, no; Sir Alured is perfectly aware those verses are to contain nothing for Lady Arlington — they are to be simply addressed to the Lady of the Leaf."

Lady Valmorden smiled; and peace was restored by this fortunate allusion.

"Certainly, high rank and influence are fine things," resumed the lively Lesbina: "were I a princess, *par ex-*

* The Princess Ulrica of Prussia (some say the Princess Amelia) one day desired Voltaire to make her a declaration of love, in which the word *love* should not once be mentioned; upon which the gallant poet, as if by inspiration, immediately produced the following verses: —

Souvent un peu de verité
Se mêle au plus grossier mensonge:
Cette nuit, dans l'erreur d'un songe
Au rang des rois j'étois monté
Je vous aimois, princesse, et j'osois vous le dire:
Les dieux, à mon réveil, ne m'ont pas tout ôté
Je n'ai perdu que mon empire.

THIEBAULT'S *Anecdotes of Frederic the Second.*

emple, like the Duchesse du Maine, I should like to institute, among my friends, an Order of the Leaf, as she instituted the Order of the Bee. The gifted, the intellectual alone, should aspire to be admitted to the Order of the Leaf; while the frail and trifling daisy might be, not inappropriately, chosen for the emblem and device of the coquettes and dandies, the whole tribe of fair-weather flutterers that sport in the sunshine, and have not a single resource to defend them against the storms of adversity, or the chilling gales of neglect."

While her ladyship continued ambitiously endeavouring to shine amid her immediate circle, Alured had penned a few hasty stanzas. He took a moment, in which he thought himself unobserved, to present them to Lady Arlington. A secret consciousness made her receive them with blushes and silence; and no more was said during the course of the evening, about the task she had set him. They were as follows: —

TO LAURA.

A shape like Dian — crisp, luxuriant wreathes
Of auburn tresses, such as Cupid loves
To twine for bowstrings when revenge he breathes
'Gainst some cold youth whom grace nor beauty
moves.

With eyes of genial fire to light the morn,
Yet soft, when kind, as evening's dewy ray;
Brows, that proclaim a soul for empire born,
And smiles to bid th' enamoured world obey.

Such is her form: while, mantling in her cheeks,
Or spreading fainter roses o'er her breast,
Her eloquent blood a thousand passions speaks,
And bids my throbbing bosom know no rest.

Yet (thoughtless Fair!) she wills me sing her eyes,
Upbraids my drowsy lyre's unwaken'd chords;
" Make me the subject of thy verse," she cries,
" Talk not of love — yet give a loose to words!"

Too constant object of my enraptured soul
How shall I serve, or how thy will refuse?
Can sober precept passion's power controul,
Love be my theme — or silent be the Muse!

"There is that lovely, that highly-gifted and unfortunate young creature," exclaimed a respectable elderly lady, fixing her eyes, full of compassion, on Ellen, "imbibing the intoxicating incense of flattery on the one hand, and the deadly poison of infidelity on the other!" Her eyes glanced, as she spoke, from Lady Valmorden to Sir Alured Vere.

"Surely, my dear madam," observed the person to whom she addressed herself, "you cannot fear for the correctness of Lady Arlington! She is a pattern wife and mother, and her principles —"

"Principles! Don't talk to me of the principles of a young woman placed on the giddy pinnacle of fashion, without parents, without religion, and without real love for her husband."

The evening finished with a variety of amusing trifles. French proverbs and charades were acted with great spirit by

Lady Valmorden and a gentleman of that country; and at length Lady Valmorden, who, though she was not pretty, had a pretty profile, introduced, in order to bring this into notice, a French pastime, called *Colin-maillard à la Silhouette.* According to the rules of this play, one individual among the circle is seated with his back to the company, and his face to the wall; and, in that situation, is to guess at the name of the person who passes behind him by his shadow, or *silhouette*, on the wall. In order to puzzle the guesser, the persons who are to pass generally assume various disguises. Lady Valmorden arranged her head-dress and drapery as much as possible like Lady Arlington's, and was much delighted with Alured's mistaking her for her friend.

A Signor Romanzani passed next. This Signor was from the Opera. His noble figure, and aquiline style of fea-

tures, were generally reckoned to bear an uncommon resemblance to the pictures and statues of Henry the Fourth of France.

As there had been an idea of getting up the opera of "La Caccia di Enrico Quattro" at Marlivale, Signor Romanzani had been included in the country party. He now, with the aid of a Vandyke dress and plumed hat, with which he equipped himself from the theatrical wardrobe, appeared, in darkly-shadowed outline, no inadequate representative of the warning spirit of the first and greatest of the Bourbon kings.

Other disguises succeeded; but Lady Valmorden, who had proposed this amusement chiefly with a view of calling Alured's attention to a beauty of which she believed herself possessed, suddenly broke it up, in evident vexation, on observing that, the moment he was released from duty, he turned to the real Lady Arlington with renewed admiration and attention.

In order to show that she set no particular value on the distinction of *his* notice, she selected Signor Romanzani for the object of a most refined and literary flirtation. The Signor, who, by dint of a fine person, a good voice, and much apparent sensibility, had risen to the summit of professional reputation as a vocal performer at the Opera, would not have thought it extraordinary if a princess of the blood had done the same. In private companies this exquisite exotic was the most delightful specimen of the excess of Ultramontane vanity ever imported. Fully satisfied that he had gained an important victory over the celebrated Sir Alured Vere, he practised over, to his own most perfect satisfaction, all those tender looks and captivating smiles, of which he was so liberal in the Greek and Roman characters at the Opera; while Alured, pleased with being allowed to devote

himself uninterruptedly to Lady Arlington, beheld, with the greatest unconcern, the exclusive attention paid by the flighty Lesbina to the foreign Signor.

The importance which Lady Arlington's approbation, in the merest trifles, began to assume with him, would have alarmed the vigilance of Alured in a less frivolous society, or a less dissipated scene. As it was, he felt some confusion on recalling the occurrences of the evening. His heart was certainly not drawn away from Leonora, but his fancy was; and, in a character like his, fancy is the predominant quality. From the time of his separation from her, he had never neglected his engagement to send his lovely cousin a circumstantial journal, equally delightful from the tender sentiments it breathed, and the variety of anecdote it contained. Now, as he prepared, according to custom, before he retired to rest, to add a few lines to his journal,

Alured felt an unaccountable constraint creep over his style, and impart a coldness and feebleness to his pen.

"This journal-writing is a bad plan," he said: "Letters would answer the purpose much better!"

Not being quite satisfied with his diary of the last week, Alured dispatched, instead of it, a letter to Leonora. It contained less about himself, his thoughts, his plans, or engagements, than he had been used to transmit; but abounded, more than usual, in professions of unabated attachment and constancy.

Mean time, some distinguished spirits among the Inimitable band were so delighted with each other, that they made a tacit agreement not to part during the summer. The scene was changed, but not the spirit of this select society. Weymouth was the place to which Lady Valmorden removed, and her "inseparable" Lady Arlington took a house there about the same time.

Lady Valmorden was in high spirits, and observed, that the presence of Sir Alured Vere alone was wanting to complete the pleasure of the party. Sir Alured's presence was not wanting long.

CHAP. XVI.

La gloire des ancêtres est comme une lumière qui fait paroître les bonnes et les mauvaises qualités de leur descendans.

How painful it is to write to a person indifferent or disagreeable to us! The pen moves sluggishly and unwillingly to its task — the hand almost involuntarily draws back from forming the letters required —— but when we write to a person we love, oh, how different is the case! — Ideas crowd to the mind faster than the pen has power to set them down: that pen itself flows free and unconstrained, and the writer's only care is so to regulate each expression of love and esteem, that they may not offend by their excess, or, by their number, become importunate.

Such, perhaps, were Leonora's feelings whenever she sat down, according to promise, to write to Alured.

"How grateful I am to Heaven, my dearest friend," she said, "that has crowned the other blessings of my prosperous life, by adding the tie of consanguinity to those of preference and regard with which you consider me! That circumstance seems to give me a right to express my affection for you. Oh, Alured, must you not now supply to me the place of brother, counsellor, and friend? I attend to the studies you have recommended me to pursue in your absence. Every thing that enables me the better to appreciate you—every thing that assimilates me a little nearer to your mind, must possess an interest, a charm for me. I take lessons from your Sicilian favourite and *protegé*, D'Amonio; and assure you, my recommendation, seconded by his very superior musical talent, has gained him great popularity.

When he brings his violin, you would laugh to see with what pleasure I greet his comic countenance and mask-like features. — It is not that foreign countenance — those exaggerated features, I behold. — In imagination, I see his patron — a very different person, you will allow; and part of the peculiar expression of Alured's looks appears, by association, to rest even upon the rough lineaments of D'Amonio.

"But, if I improve either in ornamental or intellectual accomplishments, it is from the same original * cause. "*Siccome la Rosa riceve dai raggi del Sole la porpora del suo bel colore, nell' istesso modo se tu trovi nel mio spirito e nei miei sentimenti qualche cosa degna di stima ne ho l'obbligo al tuo sublime ingegno. Toltone il mio amore, tutto il rimanente e tuo.*"

"So you have been introduced to the

* Lettere di una Peruviana.

celebrated Lady Valmorden — " like her very well."—" She is really well-informed," you say, " which, united to a vein of originality, renders the graces of her conversation quite piquante." — I felicitate, but do not envy her. I would not, if I could, be equal to you, Alured. — I would not exchange, for the pleasure of shining, the delight I feel in contemplating, in acknowledging the superiority of the mind to which mine looks up for every thing. — I must leave off writing, for your little dog Ezio's barking interrupts me. — Poor fellow ! he *will* be taken notice of ; and I would rather feed and caress him than visit Polito's whole collection.—You see I shall never make either a *bel-esprit*, or a woman of science.

" P. S. You often see Lady Arlington. — My heart longs to ask questions about her, but I know not how to propose them. — She once was very dear to me. — Tell me, at least, in your next, whether she appears to you well, and enjoying tranquillity."

When Alured received the letters of Leonora, they did not fail to recall her vividly to his remembrance. But, at other times, business, politics, the hurry of the great world, and the security of possessing her affections, produced the usual effects of security, in a little abating the fervour of his flame.

Leonora he still considered as the "home of his heart:" but he thought it no harm to make short occasional excursions from home; and in one of these excursions he followed Lady Arlington to Weymouth.

In all this, Lady Arlington was, herself, by no means free from blame. Her vanity was touched by Sir Alured's attentions, though her heart was not; and the vacancy of that heart left room for the admission of a foe so insidious into her bosom. Lady Arlington's was not the restless, active vanity of Lady Valmorden — courting, canvassing, almost conquering admiration; but, when ad-

miration, though even under a questionable form, sought *her*, she had not steadiness of principle sufficient wholly to discourage and resist it. Calm, beautiful, and dignified, she was formed for the Laura, as Lady Valmorden was for the Sappho of a man of genius. Her reception of Alured's verses too plainly evinced this; and, since that time, his attentions had been wholly transferred from her brilliant friend to herself. Just as the malignity of the world would, perhaps, have begun severely to animadvert upon her conduct, she was fortunately saved from any farther imprudence by one of those little incidents in life, in which a foible is sometimes turned to the advantage of a virtue.

The day was remarkably fine, and Sir Alured called with the intention of driving her out. Lady Arlington was seated at her writing-desk, on which was spread a variety of papers, that she seemed to be perusing with more than

common interest. The roses which were sunk in glasses to a level with her perfumed desk, hardly equalled the tint of her cheek, as the dark lashes of her downcast eyes heightened, by contrast, its glowing richness; and, as her lips murmured the half-formed sounds of what she read, they were, when in movement, more lovely.

"She never looked so divinely," thought Alured: "I am glad I determined to take her out in my curricle."

At his approach, Ellen started in some confusion: so deeply abstracted had she been, that she had not heard his name announced.

"Which way shall I drive you to-day, Lady Arlington? To T—— Castle?"

"Excuse me, I have no intention of driving out to-day," Ellen, with a freezing accent, replied.

Alured looked surprised and piqued.

"I am particularly engaged this morning," Lady Arlington resumed, in a still

drier tone; " but I shall hope to see you, Sir Alured, at my assembly on Thursday."

" I may presume those papers are what occupy you," Alured returned; " are they of such a nature that a literary friend may be intrusted with their contents, or ——"

" They deserve to be communicated to the whole world," replied Ellen, with animation; " but at present I have not courage to execute the task."

With this enigmatical answer, Alured was obliged to be satisfied; and perceiving his presence was far from being desired, after a little more trifling chitchat, took leave.

We have already observed that Ellen possessed, to a degree of weakness, the failing of family pride; but this " glorious fault," in common with all such as have a degree of honourable feeling for their foundation, was of a much safer description than many other prejudices in which she might have indulged.

That morning, the sight of some family arms defectively engraved in a book of heraldry, had sent her to her old amusement of sketching the various bearings of the different noble houses allied, by blood or marriage, to that of Fitzalbert. Being uncertain as to the meaning of one of the mottos, she recollected that her late mother had left some written notices respecting the principal branches of the family, which probably contained the information she wanted. On opening these documents, Ellen did not find the desired explanation; but, like those philosophers who, in searching after some unattainable truth, light upon several other curious and valuable discoveries, she found her attention insensibly engaged, her feelings irresistibly interested, by the pleasing and impressive manner in which several curious anecdotes, highly honourable to her ancestors, were related. One article peculiarly attracted her: it was entitled —

"*Distinguished Women of the Family of Fitzalbert.*"

In this, she read various instances of women, from the crusading times down to those of civil war and revolution in England, who had distinguished themselves as daughters, wives, and mothers, by filial heroism, by conjugal piety, by extensive learning, and even by personal intrepidity. These narratives, all drawn from authentic historical documents, were thus inscribed by Mrs. Fitzalbert: —

"*For my dearest Daughter.*"

"When the natural sorrow for my death is changed, by time, into a chastened gratitude in reflecting on my release, — when you, my dear Ellen, can open these papers without tears and with advantage, I recommend them to your serious examination. Consider them as the dying bequest of a mother who had, latterly, no tie to life but your welfare, and who fostered your very foibles, as a

counterbalance to more alarming dangers. From your earliest childhood, your character has been my study. It possesses uncommon elevation and purity, united to violent passions.

" Ellen, you are formed for one of the heroines of your house!—Beware how you disappoint your high destination. Anxious, by every means, to strengthen your principles, and form your mind to virtue, this collection of examples, all drawn from the family to which you belong, has been my pleasing task for years, during the intervals of languishing indisposition. While I live, you will not need it; but, when launched into the world without a guide so fondly interested in your welfare, the instructions it contains may with advantage be referred to; and, if ever inclined to be led away by that world's dangerous maxims, you will remember you are the FIRST FITZALBERT who ever suffered herself to be influenced by them."

Lady Arlington had just arrived at the conclusion of this sentence, when Vere made his appearance. The admonition it contained, arriving so opportunely, had deeply affected her.

"You are right, my mother!" she mentally exclaimed: "your Ellen shall not be one of those thoughtless females who suffer obloquy to rest upon their memory, even while innocence marks their conduct. No; when *my* name is joined to this long catalogue of those who *have lived*, let the only addition be—"She was unfortunate, but deserved a happier fate."

On Ellen's high and impassioned mind no impression, whether of good or evil, was ever of a transitory nature. She persevered in the reserve with which she, that morning, treated Sir Alured; and he was never afterwards able to regain the ground he had lost. Thus, pride confirmed the principles of a woman, over whom religion had little or no controul.

In the innocent caresses of her only child, a daughter, Lady Arlington sought a compensation for the want of other domestic interests. In her little Clementina she already fancied she discovered signs of sensibility and intelligence, and often, when bending over her infant charms with the fond partiality of a youthful mother's love, would softly murmur, "*You* shall never be sacrificed as *I* have been!"

"Quite in the sentimentals, I declare!" said Lady Valmorden, as she suddenly broke in upon Ellen's retirement, and discovered her tearfully contemplating her happy child. "Your ladyship had better appoint me, at once, as your "*flapper!*" you want one, I can tell you, most egregiously! Have you forgot that we go on the water to-day, and that your presence is indispensably required?"

Ellen knew this was true; and, with less taste than ever for dissipation, prepared for the joyless duties of the day.

With far different feelings she had, formerly, encountered the breeze of the ocean; but now, these water-parties ever occasioned in her a sensation of languishment, of terror, and dislike; as if the sight of the inconstant element reminded her of her vanished bliss.

The water-party was, to Ellen, totally unproductive of amusement. Returning home, she fell into one of those fits of abstraction which were reckoned, by her admirers, an additional charm in the fascinatingly pensive Lady Arlington; but which were, in reality, the result of a wearied spirit, and a wounded mind.

Threatenings of a storm came on before the party disembarked. Some of the ladies chose to be frightened, and this produced a degree of confusion on their landing, in which nobody attended particularly to Ellen. Stepping from the boat, her head grew giddy, and her foot slipped: she sunk, for a moment, in the waves — then rose again, and stretched out her arms for assistance.

A party of gentlemen were walking on the shore, apparently observing the company that had been on the water. One of these instantly darted forward — plunged fearlessly after the sinking Ellen — and bore her on shore, just as exhausted nature refused to make any further efforts towards self-preservation.

She was carried home in a state of insensibility; her lord coolly observing, that he always disliked water-parties, and that he thought this a fortunate incident, as it would, probably, cure Ellen of all wish to partake of them in future.

Lady Arlington's state, for some hours, was really alarming. The dangerous symptoms yielded, at length, to the judicious remedies applied for her relief. It was, however, some days before her ladyship was able to see her friends as usual. Had she been possessed of as much vanity as tenderness of disposition, she could not but have felt gratified by

the number of cards left, during this interval, by noble and fashionable enquirers at her door. But, among this multitude of names and titles, Ellen still saw but one — "Captain Mandeville, R. N." — Mandeville! the man who once had blessed her life, and still, perhaps, was destined to preserve it.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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